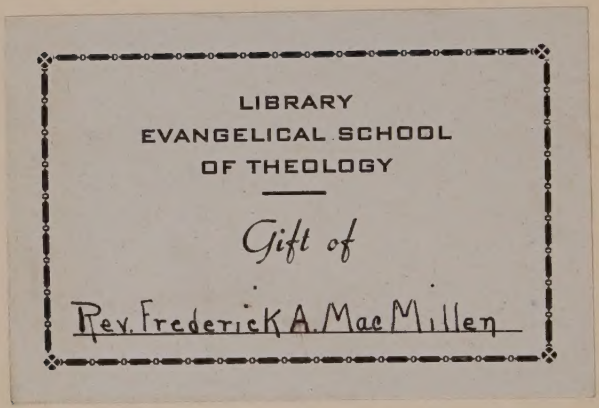
MAR 15 1960


LIBRARY
EVANGELICAL SCHOOL
OF THEOLOGY
Gift of
Rev. Frederick A. MacMillen

J. A. MacMillan

THE COLLEGE COURSE AND THE PREPARATION FOR LIFE

THE COLLEGE COURSE AND THE PREPARATION FOR LIFE

EIGHT TALKS ON FAMILIAR UNDERGRADUATE PROBLEMS

BY

ALBERT PARKER FITCH

President of the Faculty of Andover Theological Seminary

LIBRARY OF
ted Theological Semina
LB
2321
.F47
1914
48,92

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge

11015

The Evangelical
School of Theology

204
F

COPYRIGHT, 1914, BY ALBERT PARKER FITCH

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Published October 1914

TO

F. D. F.

WHO IN UNWEARYING AND GENEROUS LABORS
AND NATIVE NOBILITY OF SPIRIT
HAS LIVED BESIDE AND FOR ME
A BEAUTIFUL AND EFFICIENT LIFE

MAR 15 1900

APOLOGIA

No man can fathom the heart of a youth. He who thinks he can, is, of all men, the most incompetent to deal with youth's problems. But, because I believe in youth, I know something of its amazing and moving manifestations. I know its capacity for idealism and the capacity for pain that often goes with it. I know the passion, at once the glory and the peril of youth, which leaps and surges in its veins, and also the poignant moral suffering that accompanies passion, as truly in youth as in middle age. I know that strange deification of sorrow, made by those whom sorrow has not yet really touched, and the heroic struggle with insurmountable obstacles that youth will make and love. I know the intolerance, the incredible carelessness, the ruthless judgments, the unconscious cruelty, the transparent sophistries, the sloth of body and mind, the yielding to the appetites of the flesh, almost at the moment when rejoicing in the visions of the spirit, to which youth is ever prone. But, deeper than all this, I know that at its heart and in the long run, youth lives in high places and its feet are eager for the mountain-tops. Modesty and

simplicity and sincerity, a noble mixture of reserve and frankness, the will to do right and the hatred of pretense, these lie at the bottom of nearly every beginning life. Not infrequently the heart that is most merry and inconsequent is also most sensitive and shy. And here, I suppose, is the only apologia for these talks and the themes, most ancient yet most fresh, with which they deal. They are written by one who loves youth and reveres its problems, and thinks that to be young is the divinest thing in the world — by one who believes in the native dignity and worth of young human nature and sees, beneath the amazing and baffling inconsistencies of youth's life, its essential decency, its unconquerable idealism, its shining possibilities. Whatever of value or insight these pages may possibly possess is due to that mingling of solicitude and faith which many of us, whose feet have walked longer upon this earth, feel for those who have just begun to tread its surface. And, surely, it is only they who are themselves lovers of youth who can perceive and understand its problems, for they alone are able to re-live them. Neither the preacher nor the patron is tolerable or valuable, for long-continued contact, with beginning lives. They seek instinctively, among their elders, for the comrade, older, indeed, but still eager and respon-

sive, one to whom the disciplines and disappointments of added years have not brought the dimming of the imagination, nor the loss of the power to think one's self back again into the free and joyous morning of human life. That comrade I would most ardently desire to be. And hence these ensuing chapters, which were first spoken informally before the undergraduates of Williams College, are not, I hope, essays of the didactic and moralizing sort, such as teachers and preachers might impose upon their passive and receptive hearers. They are just friendly talks of one man with some younger men. They are intended not so much to edify and instruct as to interpret and reveal.

A. P. F.

Home's Acre,
Cornish, New Hampshire,
15th July, 1914.

CONTENTS

I. Where all the Problems begin . . . 1
II. The Struggle for Personal Recognition 31
III. The Fight for Character 62
IV. The Religious Instinct and the Christian Experience 90
V. The Exceeding Difficulties of Belief . 118
VI. Religion and Scholarship 148
VII. Is Learning Essential 175
VIII. The Distaste for the Beautiful . . . 204

THE COLLEGE COURSE AND THE PREPARATION FOR LIFE

CHAPTER I

WHERE ALL THE PROBLEMS BEGIN

THEY begin in the Freshman year; they are, indeed, an inevitable and significant portion of its very substance. For that year is always and everywhere a high adventure. It is compounded of delightful if terrifying uncertainties. It is the exploration, big with fate, which each awakening youth makes into the real world of his fellow human beings, into the real convictions, desires, and powers of his own soul. There still comes once, to every boy, even in our safe and comfortable and commonplace world, a morning when the mystery and the thrill of the Unknown lay hold upon him; when the call of the undiscovered country is in his ears; when he knows that, at last, he is free to walk an untrodden path and to do and be what no one else has ever done or been before. That is the morning of the day when college opens, and he, once a schoolboy, now an undergraduate, stands, his own master, at his dormitory door.

Consider a moment the background out of which the Freshman issues. Up to the day when he matriculates, his life, if it has been a normal and wholesome one, has been summed up in the terms of a mediated experience. It has been made for him by his parents, his teachers, or his friends. Religion, morals, knowledge, social standards, personal habits have been accepted on authority. They have been given and received. The keynote of all wholesome boyhood is obedience. The schoolboy does not really understand life, nor, for the most part, does he endeavor or desire to. He just accepts it, taking for granted that things are as they appear. It may well be true that, even in the early boyish days, he has moments of profound and instinctive expectation, when the slumbering inner life stirs and tries to find its own outlook upon its little, ordered world. Amid the security and acquiescence of later childhood, there come, not infrequently, to sensitive and thoughtful boys flashes of intuitive discernment into the grim world beyond childhood where elemental forces are to grapple for possession of the awakening soul. But, for the most part, it is only a surface experience which the boy perceives, and life is known to him only in its accepted and accredited expressions.

But when he comes up to college, at once a new world opens. Four years of unparalleled opportunity and extraordinary stimulus are set before him. They contain a maximum of privilege and a minimum of responsibility. Above all, they offer to the youth spiritual and intellectual freedom, the one thing which in the final days of schooling he did most passionately desire. The college deliberately releases him from the restraints and traditions of a provincial and domestic life. His comings and goings are not watched. Within certain limitations his courses are not dictated. He is given a large measure of leisure and independence to use that leisure as he sees fit. Most significant of all, ideas and convictions are no longer imposed upon him from without. In the critical and neutral atmosphere of the college classroom everything is questioned, nothing is taken for granted; it is the facts and all the facts and nothing but the facts which he pursues. No longer, then, is his a selected and mediated experience. Nothing is received by him now except as he is able to see for himself its inherent reality and worth. Where and how he will, the boy touches life, as it is, with his own right hand. If the keynote of every good school is obedience, then the keynote of every good college is freedom, freedom to in-

vestigate everything for one's self. The boy now is not merely permitted, he is expected, to find his own soul and his own view of life. It is this abrupt and radical tradition from school to college, a transition which, in our present American system of education, is as swift and sudden and sharp as it well could be, which intoxicates the Freshman, and imparts to the first college year both its dangers and its splendor.

The first thing, then, to remember, is that Romance begins with the day of registration. The absence from home, and from any real parental or academic scrutiny; the free and intimate contact with many other newly discovered fellow human beings, all of one's own age and sex; the sense of that opportunity for self-expression which accompanies independence, and of how the future may hang on the way to opportunity is employed — all these combine to make the Freshman year the first great essay of a young man's life. The expanding and exploring passion which, away back in the morning of the world, drove Abraham out of the familiar city of his fathers to seek an unknown country and to go out not knowing whither he went; the inner urge that made Ulysses sail the wine-dark seas even beyond the baths of all the western stars; the will and lift and hope with which

Columbus paced each night his tiny vessel's poop and ever searched the dim horizon for he knew not what — something of this age-old, masculine spirit of romance and adventure every normal undergraduate consciously feels. Of course, he forgets the old. Of course, he laughs at the futile prudence of his elders, the shabby wisdom of an antique world. All his second-hand experience, the accepted saws, the imposed views drop, like the shreds of an old garment, from his naked passion for reality. For life is fresh, and he is young, and he is free, and his world is not quite like anybody else's, and he means to know it for himself. And then, too, running parallel with all the glamour and romance of the college adventure, a very element of its charm and a part of its fascination is the sense of uncertainty, of perplexity, of not being quite sure of one's environment or one's self. The hope and confidence and joy are always mingled with questionings and self-distrust and fear. So that the four undergraduate years present an extraordinary mixture of initiative and timidity, courage and cowardice, sublime confidence, profound and real despair upon the student's part. Often one mood succeeds another with such bewildering and irrational rapidity that some men's lives in college seem

like rudderless ships, which, unstable as the waters upon which they ride, are equally unable to excel.

One best understands the Freshman nature, then, and can most intelligently predict and interpret its inchoate and whimsical expressions, if one remembers into what a vivid and transfigured world it introduces the boy, a world in which every value is re-made, distorted, or enhanced as the case may be, by being bathed in the light that never was on sea or land. The stimulating of the imagination, the heightening of self-consciousness, the swift enlargement of the perceptions and ideas which academic life brings to an alert and sensitive youth — all these combine to change the very face of nature before his eyes. For the first time the Universe takes on significance and reality; he personalizes it, it becomes a veritable and observant Presence; and sometimes he feels with it a mystic touch. That eager and uplifted look which dwellers in university towns so often see in the eyes of the incoming men, a look made up partly of confidence and unconscious pride, partly of startled questioning and doubt — that dawning conqueror's look often seen on the fresh and unworn faces of those who themselves have made no conquests yet — that is the sign

that they are coming to themselves, that they are finding life not forbidding and remote, but warm, ready, and expectant, and that they are gathering themselves together for the first plunge beneath its depths!

So, as the background for all our discussions, we assume that the undergraduate's life is, for the most part, cast into the romantic aspect, and that it is with intense absorption and idealizing passion that he lives his four college years. The whole round world expresses itself for him in that particular assemblage of other young male creatures, just like, yet unlike himself, into which he has been cast. Into the vortex of their eager, springing lives he expects to be drawn. There reside for him the supreme values. In that world he means to find all the poetry and the friendship which the gray-haired graduates, as they sit about the fire, recount; all the vision and aspiration which college hymns and college songs suggest. How vital is his first plunge into this communal, undirected life! How instantly the inner man awakens to it! Then his soul, that which is, he, himself, begins to ask, Who am I, and for what came I into the world? And while it thus questions, it hears the world calling, inviting it to furthest discovery and to utmost conquest, saying, Come out to me, O youth!

You and your comrades come together, and as, in me, you see and feel and do, so shall you know! Thus there re-begins, each autumn, in every college town, that search, the most necessary yet dangerous search the world has knowledge of — the quest of half-awakened youth for its own realities. This is what makes the untellable romance, the apparent recklessness, the poignant, perilous delights of undergraduate days.

It is, then, out of this situation which we have thus been trying to describe that all the characteristic problems of youth arise. And the first problem is the social one. For in college, being free, the boy has his initial opportunity to find out whether he can make a man of himself. And the first test of manhood is always in connection with one's contemporaries. What standing can he win with them? The first adventure is the search for the approbation of one's peers; the first problem is the problem of personal recognition. What veritable, if temporary, tragedies that phrase may cover! How many shy and conscious lads have lived their college years in acutest misery, feeling that, because they had not attained the coveted undergraduate standing, they were self-confessed failures, already consigned to mediocrity. The primary instinct of

the awakening life, born of its mixture of confidence and hesitancy, is the craving for the support and recognition of its comrades. Their sanction is the first thing the average undergraduate desires, and, without it, no other sanction is sufficient. For of course his parents believe in him, — in a sense they must, — and he feels they do not see him as he is, affection has made them blind. Of course the college authorities accept him. But theirs is the general and official approval, which, at the beginning, they give to all. His real judges, therefore, must be his peers. There is some justice in this feeling, so intense in youth, that the preliminary condition of larger and more substantial achievements is the winning of the confidence and admiration of the men of one's own generation.

Yet how handicapped is many a youth as he approaches his social problem! For he is an American, his life, most probably, issuing from a thin background. He comes up to college often acutely conscious of a crudity and ignorance which are neither supported nor concealed by those inherited traditions and usages which, in an older society, give assurance to youth and help it to make its start. Hence how few undergraduates, especially when under-classmen, really

dare to be themselves. How often, at alumni reunions, one hears the remark: "Why, what a fine fellow Smith is! I don't seem to have known him in college. How much he has developed since." Of course, Smith was n't known in college. He did n't know himself in those undergraduate days; he did n't dare to. The under-classman, such is the irony of his situation, tends to use his new-found freedom to become, of all men in the world, the expert imitator, the very slave of the public opinion of his peers. Independence of judgment, of action, even of dress is foreign to him. But before railing at him for this negative plasticity, we must remember how naturally it grows out of the circumstances of his position. We older men can remember the envy with which we looked upon the debonair and sophisticated youth of our class, gay, polished, and adaptable, and how dumb we were in his presence. We could not possibly have taken toward him, in those days, the attitude commended in the terse advice I once heard the president of a great university give to his incoming Freshmen: "Avoid the so-called magnetic men in your class," he said, "I have observed that they seldom amount to anything." No! To us such men appeared to be the very darlings of the gods. So there are many trage-

dies in college, growing out of the social situation and a part of the finding experience of youth, which are real enough at the time, although they are pathetically overestimated by the victim. And, before we come to discuss this whole matter at length, let me say just this word, in advance, to any boy who may read these lines. I believe that situation should be studied in all seriousness and sympathy, with as clear an apprehension of its present importance as of its relative insignificance.

Again, how intimately connected with these swift and radical transitions are the moral issues, the fights and despairs of gallant youth who strive to keep the body under. How utterly impossible it is to judge these struggles fairly or to approach them wisely, unless they are seen against the background of the tumultuous, expanding, and discovering period of life in which they take their rise. It is not merely that the recognition of selfhood precipitates these struggles; they are an essential part of that recognition itself. Here is this overwhelming impact of life that beats in upon a sensitive, startled, suddenly self-conscious boy. Its stimulus is beyond all computation. The unsated emotions, the unspent energies, are aroused to their utmost capacities by it. The restlessness of unexpressed

and unintelligible powers continually besets him. Sometimes these primitive instincts tempt him to deeds whose entire significance he cannot know. Sometimes they fasten upon him abnormal or indulgent habits of body or mind when he is scarcely aware of what a habit is. Who, then, seeing a youth's mistakes, even his darker and more inexcusable ones, in the light of his age and his environment, can wholly condemn them? Who would marvel at the brutal, heroic, ludicrous, pathetic, irrational, exasperating things that a hard-pressed youth will do. With what prodigality, sometimes, will he dull the keenest edge of unused sense! How he will hasten to bruise his feet in the ways of dark desire! He can do the most dreadful things at times, and for a time, appears to be unscathed by them. But we, watching each moral struggle, and clearly perceiving its antecedents, can scarcely condemn or despise him. Indeed, it may be questioned whether any man, until he has ceased to be shocked, and ceased to be scornful, over any expression of the life of his fellow human beings, has much reason to suppose that he can interpret them justly or influence them sincerely. At all events, to merely preach, here, would be entirely futile, and to condemn, quite despicable. For when we consider the reserves of unexhausted

emotion, the capacity for vivid imagination, the imperious instincts of abounding youth; and, when we remember that, here, ignorance of self and life and liberty of choice for a time go hand in hand, then we must surely acknowledge that multitudes of young men never quite understand their errors, and need, not so much the preacher or the mentor as the friend. One should never forget, in dealing with the moral problems of the undergraduate, that they are the problems of one who still moves about in worlds not realized. The one thing, therefore, which he has a right to expect of us, when we approach him in this field of his experience, is sympathy, faith, and comradeship, and not so much the imposing of sententious wisdom as the imparting of moral power. Nor should one ever forget, either, that the very conditions of academic life, which conditions we older men determine and perpetuate, and to which we invite and introduce the youth, are not entirely favorable to the best self-development. For all the indubitable ethical idealism of every college community, it nevertheless remains true that there is a terribly inhuman side to scholastic life. Many brilliant scholars and teachers appear to youth to be compounds of fire and ice, glowing minds, but frigid souls! There is a sort of pagan and unmoral sense which sometimes

accompanies, and appears to be fostered by, large intellectual powers and achievements. The brutal selfishness of the pupil is, not infrequently, quite equaled by the frank indifference and self-absorption of his instructor. Who that lives in academic communities is not often moved to amazement at the sublime disregard which, with no offer of friendly hospitality and no provision of more decent social opportunity, permits youth, night after night, to frequent the cheap musical shows, with their open incitement to vulgarity and lust. It is true that a boy must fight his own battles and that only a sentimentalist would desire to fight them for him. It is true that no one can carry boys through adolescence to manhood in perambulators and that no decent boy would endure the experiment. But it is also true that when older men, who have come through the struggle and won their place, proceed to ignore the ever-continuing battle, and to declare its present issues no concern of theirs, they thereby show themselves something less than normal human beings. Youth is quick to perceive that such an irresponsible attitude toward the moral issues of life argues a certain human skepticism in him who holds it. They often, if unjustly, attribute it to failure in the past and cynical indifference as to the future.

It is, then, demanded of us also, by our very humanity, that we live close to these ethical struggles of our younger brothers of the race. For in this moral world of youth, with what immeasureable human values, with what capacity for effort and suffering, do we deal! Does it not make one's very heart stand still to reflect that within reach of us and all about us, in each day of the long college year, there must be young men who are putting forth their desperate, somber, half-mechanical efforts to hold these mounting, leaping passions until the darkness and the helplessness shall lessen, and something or some one shall give them peace. Truly, George Eliot was right, and expresses the natural attitude honest men take toward the ethical problems of their younger brothers, when she said: "Surely, surely, the only true knowledge of our fellow men is that which enables us to feel with them. Our subtlest analysis must miss the essential truth unless it be lit up by that love which sees in all forms of human thought and work the life and death struggles of separate human beings."

And so, too, the religious problem of the undergraduate is only clearly or sanely seen when conceived of as largely the product of his passion to be free and his bewilderment in the new world of realities to which freedom introduces him. There

are three quite distinct types of conventionally religious youth who come up to college. There is, first, the boy who identifies religion with subscription to creed, allegiance to formulæ handed down by an elder generation. There are certain classic statements of the Christian faith. They are majestic with the prestige of their antiquity. By them the fathers and the fathers' fathers have, for the most part, lived and died. The boy does not relate these creeds to the remainder of his field of thought. He does not understand them. He has no world-view into which they fit. He just accepts them, often with a superior and complacent manner which is as ludicrous as it is exasperating to his elders. He is a Churchman, a Liberal, a Conservative; and that largely sums up his religion.

Then there is the boy who identifies his faith with pious practices. He has been taught to read the Scriptures, to make his devotions, to keep the Sabbath, to attend church. He has been told there are certain things he must not do, and certain other things he may do. He conceives of wrong and right as mutually exclusive territories, localities separated by sharp boundary lines. Faith and righteousness, to him, are easily achieved by remaining in the right territory. So he becomes the youthful

conformist, and though most often of sterling stuff, sometimes appears a most outrageous prig.

And, finally, there is a third, brand-new type of youthful godliness, and a most amazing one it is to the returning graduates of two decades ago! The ardent if superficial humanism of our time has produced the youth who identifies religion with ethical idealism, social service, and administrative efficiency. He is both pious and popular, altruistic and athletic; he has wedded and made one the secular and the spiritual! He is a past-master at planning a missionary campaign, organizing a "student conference," or making up an attractive programme. He will be found teaching in the settlement house, or acting as scout-master for East Side gamins, or installed as the college Christian Association's secretary. Personally, he is wholly delightful; a most friendly and approachable chap; in all ways of practical usefulness and helpfulness amazingly able and resourceful. But his chief interest, like that of many of his peers, is in executive tasks, "doing things"; in trying out his new social and economic theories; and in being a sort of *deus ex machina* for his various protégés. He has character but knows little of religious passion, has no clear spiritual insight, nor is he always too well acquainted with his soul.

These, then, are the sorts of boys, in the religious realm, whom the forces of freedom and reality are to mould in the plastic college years. Of course, therefore, all three types, if they grow and amount to anything in college, have their spiritual problems, and it is almost to be expected that a first-rate Sophomore will be fiercely contemptuous of the faith! For when the awakening mind perceives that most of the inherited formulations of religion are antique in language and obsolete in their world-view, then, wherever experience has been identified with creed and faith with its expressions, the youth begins to be in trouble. If he loses the inherited philosophy of his religion, as he is almost sure to, he appears to have lost his spiritual experience with it. Again, one of the first things that an observant youth discovers is that the better men are, the more widely they are apt to differ in acceptance or rejection of pious practices; and that such practices themselves change and disappear from generation to generation; and that saying "Lord, Lord," and keeping the Sabbath holy, and paying every tithe, is n't necessarily religion, and, often, does not proceed from religious motives. Sometimes, as the youth perceives, the men who indulge in these things are far from doing justly and loving mercy and

walking humbly with their God. It is, therefore, inevitable that the life which has confused religion with respectability and confounded character with conformity, when it experiences its first disillusionment should naturally repudiate all traditional forms of piety and every venerable religious practice, and even conceive of all the organized expressions of Christianity as largely hypocrisies. Nor is it hard to deal with this situation when one sees it as merely incident to the whole difficult but precious transition which the youth is going through in every department of his life. That process, here, should carry him out of an unvital faith which he has merely inherited into the power of the spiritual experience which he may personally acquire.

But, perhaps, the problem is not so simple when we come to deal with our third type, the lad who confuses spiritual forces with their beneficient social expressions and identifies personal religion with clean and amiable living. This new figure in the college world is hailed as the very champion of godliness upon the campus. He is the defender of the faith, drawn from the ranks of the indifferent, the impressive witness to the true revival of religion in our day. He is, in short, one of the overestimated, overempha-

sized figures in the undergraduate world of the moment. It is one of the serious, and not altogether easy, tasks of the college teacher and preacher to arouse this life to realities, to make it acquainted with the exceeding difficulties of belief, to vex it with the problems of the origin and destiny of the human spirit, to reveal to its own helplessness, ignorance, and sin. This is the life that is in most danger of passing through the college years without being stirred to its depths. Certainly here the revelation of selfhood, and the awakening of personality, must mean the shaking of many amiable assurances, and the shattering of an unconscious complacency and a too-easy strength. Certainly here it is most needed, if the best in the life is ever to fulfil itself, that the revelation of self should lead to a veritable and subduing contact with that Spirit from whom all selfhood issues.

But as we thus approach the inner life of the college, how unworthy appear the current misapprehensions of undergraduate religion. One now perceives that it is not true that the college is a godless place where men are encouraged to lose their faith. On the contrary, the college is fundamentally religious because it insists on the substance rather than the expression of spiritual living, and one of its most precious offices is to

force young men to distinguish between the two. The influence of the American college, far from being unspiritual or unethical, is just the contrary. There are few other places in the community where the conditions for getting at a real religion are more favorable, or where, on the whole, it is so easy to do right and so hard to do wrong. And, again, it obviously is not true that men, in the college period of life, are naturally unbelievers, although often they themselves believe this to be true. It is really the passion for sincerity, the grim determination to get at reality, the sense of the surpassing importance of the spirit, which it is now perceived must lie behind the form, which induces the flippant or the brutal repudiations by youth of outworn rites and discredited conceptions. There is a capacity for moral indignation in the youthful protestant, a genuine social passion, which might well put his elders to the blush. Only when we see the religious situation in college, in the light of its origins, do we realize how noble is much of the apparently irreligious expression. Only then do we realize how far from being insoluble are the difficulties which, for thinking but inexperienced youth, must surround the religious hypothesis. Most of the spiritual struggles of under-graduates, therefore, should be dealt with

as evidences of ethical sincerity, intellectual integrity, and religious capacity.

And if anything further were needed to prove the depth and reality of the spiritual influence of the college, it would be found in that mystical experience of God which comes, ever to the shaming and subduing of their elders, to many boys in their undergraduate days. For it sometimes happens, to pure-hearted and high-minded youth, that the awakening of the soul is not to temporary disillusionment nor to racking doubts, but to its own self-certified vision of the Eternal. There are always, let us humbly and gratefully acknowledge, in every college class youth who walk softly through their free and joyous days, because they are conscious that God is near. There has been revealed to them, from within, what lies behind creed and rite, personal piety and unselfish endeavor. They have had those days, of which Stopford Brooke speaks somewhere, the precious, prophetic days of youth, when, suddenly, without visible cause or reason, the life is lifted high above the Babel of existence and sees as from some watch-tower of the soul; days when youth sincerely wearies of the world, and work seems futile, and pleasure infinitely vain; days when life passes before them like the swift and insubstantial pageant of a dream, and

human intercourse is far removed, and new voices are heard in the soul, and the eternal Father calls to his awakened child.

But when we come to the intellectual problem, to the apparently hopeless task of making young scholars out of American schoolboys, we might appear to be upon more debatable ground. Yet I think the conspicuous lack of interest in intellectual matters, the failure to appreciate the value of pure learning, or to understand the ends to which it may be applied, which is so tragically or so ludicrously apparent, according as you happen to view it, in the American college, is also chiefly to be traced to the peculiar circumstances of the undergraduate's lot. Three factors, directly and powerfully influencing him, have contributed to the anomalous place of learning among us.

First, the boy usually comes from a home of slight intellectual traditions. He heard politics and business and church and neighborhood gossip and the family's material progress discussed there, but almost never art or learning. The value of ideas, the passion for knowledge, the reverence for truth in the abstract, did not enter into that circle. When, as a schoolboy, he withdrew "after supper" to his Latin and mathematics, he also withdrew from the area of

sympathetic understanding or interest on the part of his elders. There was little encouragement given to him at home to consider scholarship as an essential or practical part of the life of a human being. It is only fair to remember, when dealing with a lazy Freshman, that probably it was for social and economic reasons that his father sent him to college. He arrives on the campus with very little in the way of an intellectual inheritance.

Again, it may well be questioned whether the abrupt transition from the fixed curriculum of the secondary school to the once almost wide-open elective system (happily no longer so) of the American college has not victimized the average boy. Ought we to expect him to change at once, with enthusiasm and fidelity, from the textbook and the recitation in the prescribed subject to the lecture and the private reading in the elective — especially when the cramming process, by which he was more or less filled up for his entrance examinations, could hardly increase his sense of the seriousness and worth of things intellectual! He comes up, then, with the universal and immeasurable laziness of the normal young male, to the freedom of his Freshman year. He has very little background for an academic life, no just or idealized conception

of it. He is filled with the natural confusion of an immature and rapidly developing mind, which is suddenly transferred from one system of education to another. This confusion is enhanced by the multitude of distractions, quite unrelated to the main business of college, with which we permit his days to be filled.

And then, finally, as the third factor in his situation, we must remember that he finds within the academic world itself no generally accepted ideal of learning. The German university stands for thorough and exact knowledge gained in one department of scholarship at almost any human or æsthetic cost. The English university is wedded to the ideal of a general culture, that sort of scholarship which issues in the cosmopolitan and the gentleman. But the American college has no such widely recognized common standard. One great university encourages a highly developed individualism, directed to social and humane leadership. Another idealizes corporate values, producing among its students a magnificent *esprit de corps*, in which the individual loses himself for the sake of the common splendor of the whole. Some institutions foster the kind of learning whose commercial values can be readily perceived, the sorts of courses whose immediate utility is discernible, the scholarship

which may be cashed. If, then, we view the intellectual problem of the undergraduate as we have viewed the others, in the light of his inheritance and environment, we must expect that he could not issue from his preparatory school a full-fledged scholar, like an Athene from the brain of Zeus. Perhaps the gravest task that now confronts the American college is that of making an intelligent and reflective being out of the average collegian. But we must work at this on the recognized basis of his natural misconceptions and his inevitable ignorance. Perhaps he would not dislike scholarship if he only understood what it really was and how it might be used. It is regrettable, but not at all inexplicable, that the Freshman should identify the scholar with the scholastic, and erudition with pedantry. We are ourselves partly to blame when he sometimes conceives of the college as being chiefly a winter watering-place, designed for youth, and just touched by an academic flavor. While here, as elsewhere, the remedy must be drastic and the standards exacting, we shall not be just, and hence we shall not be effective, unless we remember that the youth has been more sinned against than sinning, and that he has never yet had a fair chance to discover the delights of intellectual discipline. If we, then,

approach him in a sympathetic spirit, meaning to lead rather than to drive, we may find an intellectual response far beyond what, in the beginning, appeared to be possible or likely.

And this is equally true of the æsthetic problem. When we speak of our young barbarians at play, as Arnold spoke of even the sophisticated and urbane Oxonians, do we not explain the noun by the adjective? Of course, they are more or less barbarians if they are young. A fastidious sense, a discriminating taste, a high and critical appreciation of beauty, and an acute distaste for ugliness, can only be acquired, unless a boy be born a Michael Angelo or a Keats, through long and varied processes. Moreover, it is once more true, here, that the college environment is not altogether favorable. Scholars, like other people, have their severe limitations, and their sometimes intense provincialisms. Not infrequently their provincialism takes the particular form of an almost cultivated indifference to beauty, a depreciation of the æsthetic. The more modern departments of the college, which deal with the arts of music and architecture, have had to win their way, not without opposition, and fight for a just place in the curriculum. It is still not uncommon to suspect of superficiality the youth who elects the fine arts, and to lay upon his

instructor the burden of proof as to his own scholarship and solid achievement. Certainly our boys are sufficiently barbarian, but are we, most of whose college buildings are worse than "factories of the Muses," altogether competent to improve them?

I believe it to be the bounden duty of the college, and the one most often neglected, to set up for youth æsthetic standards; to teach them the eternal fitness of some things, and the hideous unfitness of others; to make them see the aspect of goodness which is beauty, and the aspect of beauty which is truth. But this, I think, we shall best do as we approach the whole problem, with the expectation that the average American of one and twenty is, by the very circumstances of his lot, uninterested in, and incapable of appreciating, most of the myriad forms of beauty which lie before his very eyes. The æsthetic sanctions of virtue, the happy alliance between goodness and art, have never been greatly appreciated or believed in in our communities. I suppose we may thank the Puritan for that. Perhaps this is the reason why so many of the godly among us are inhuman, and so many of the human are ungodly! If there is a moral duty to be intelligent which rests upon the would-be developed life, then I think there is

equally the duty that the intelligent should be nobly critical and fastidious. I am inclined to believe that, when the æsthetic side of a youth's life is approached as being of as much importance to his manhood as his moral and intellectual development, then we shall do something with it.

I hope, therefore, that there may have been shown in these pages, how seriously one may take the problems of youth, and yet, in a sense, how lightly one may take them, too. They are real and critical and painful. But they do not proceed either from grave moral delinquency, or inescapable intellectual difficulties, or native incapacity, or spiritual dullness. I believe just the contrary to be true. The boy who appears to be a snob, and the boy who appears to be a stiff or a grind; the boy who appears to be irreligious and profane; the boy who is incorrigibly lazy and will not work; the boy who outrages every canon of good taste in his raiment, his vocabulary, and his pleasures — all these are not what they seem. Most of them are good men in the making, each, in accordance with the law of his own nature, passing through the inevitable stages of that fascinating if exasperating process. Every word, therefore, of the ensuing chapters comes from one who tries to hit hard, because young men are so worth the

hitting hard; but from one who always distinguishes, in his own mind, between the sin, the dullness, the mistake, and the infinitely larger and better life which is struggling to express itself in these devious and blundering ways. Most of all I should like to make it clear that nothing is further from the truth than that the normal, older life has scant faith and interest in the younger ones around it. On the contrary, most men, who are of a decent sort, have more faith in such youth than they ever had in their own. They look wistfully to it to succeed where they have failed. They are convinced that there can be nothing in these younger lives which can be hopeless now. For nearly always the difficulties, perplexities, and mistakes may find a solution if they are interpreted as the natural accompaniment of rapidly growing and highly stimulated spirits.

CHAPTER II

THE STRUGGLE FOR PERSONAL RECOGNITION

We tried, in the preceding chapter, to outline the peculiar situation in which the undergraduate finds himself. He is in the midst of a quick transition from a mediated to an unmediated experience. He possesses, for the first time, personal and intellectual freedom. The opportunity and the responsibility for self-expression have been suddenly thrust upon him. He is both elevated and subdued, as he realizes that the discovery and the testing of his manhood is at hand.

Now the first test of that manhood comes in his relations with his classmates. His inevitable secret inquiry is, what will "they" think of me? The first instinct of the awakening life is the craving for the support and admiration of its comrades. Though many an undergraduate would die rather than confess it, what he most and really wants is popularity. The very intensity of the assumed indifference to undergraduate distinctions, which some men in all colleges affect, betrays its artificial character. It is the covering of boyish pride, the armor, from the crowd, of a

sensitive spirit, but it is rarely the sincere and spontaneous expression of the youth's inner life. Few boys, in their dreams of coming college days and eager anticipations of their delights, include social insignificance or personal unpopularity! If we begin, then, with the frank discussion of the problem of the boy's personal standing, it is because that problem is more or less consciously in his mind, even if never on his lips, during the four years of his college course.

Perhaps we can most easily get at the heart of the problem if we try to analyze its human factors. In most Eastern colleges, the undergraduate body may be easily divided into three distinct classes. There is, first, that group, until late years small in numbers, but now steadily increasing in both size and significance, made up of those who have come to college from one of the large and famous fitting schools. The boys in these private schools are, for the most part, drawn from one stratum of American society. They are come from homes of a fortunate social and financial inheritance. They are already accustomed to an easy and gracious life of wide human contacts and large social horizons. Most of them have known something of the delight and stimulus of foreign travel. They meet, in school days, boys like themselves, inheritors of

the same social point of view, and of much the same personal standards and ambitions. Now these boys, when they come up to college, tend to ally themselves with the youth of similar upbringing whom they find there, because such youth offer immediate and easily recognized points of contact. This tendency of the boys of this group to withdraw among themselves means, for the most part, merely natural selection. It seldom indicates artificial or snobbish standards, but, rather, that social choices are being made, even in these most plastic years, along the lines of least resistance. Such choices are indeed short-sighted, but they are not usually unworthy or vulgar. Nevertheless it comes about, since these youth ally themselves with other youth who are already like themselves, and whom they enjoy just because of this similarity of tastes and inheritance, that they form a well-recognized group of what might be called the complacent provincials of undergraduate existence.

Then one finds a second group in the American college. It is made of those boys who come out of that great middle class of American life, which forms the bone and sinew of our nation. These boys were fitted for college at day schools and academies. Most of them are the product of the

high and Latin schools of their several localities. They have always lived at home, therefore, daily trudging to and from the school building with a strapful of books under one arm and the tin lunch-box under the other. As a rule, they show better intellectual discipline, less personal maturity, but more scholastic conscience, than do they of the first group. This is not due, I take it, to the fact that one type of school is better than the other, nor does it indicate that less able boys are to be found in the private than in the public institutions. It is rather due to the fact that all the boys from the private school are coached and sent up to college, the feeble with the strong, while it is only the more ambitious and capable lads who survive the less sympathetic processes of the public school, or who are permitted by their parents, who, in their cases, are making financial sacrifices for them, to go on into college life.

But, socially, the men of this second group are not very sophisticated. They have not had the advantages of boarding-school dormitory life, nor the opportunity, in their homes, of meeting naturally and pleasantly a large variety of people. They are, for the most part, used to thrifty, unostentatious, democratic ways of living. They often come from pious households, where they have been trained in the somewhat

rigid and external standards of a local religion. They are usually men of sturdy moral vigor. They look upon the youth of the first group, who live their pleasant, care-free, apparently worldly and abundant lives, with something of envy and something of disapproval. The self-consciousness, the shyness and reserve, which are characteristic of men at their period of development, tend to make the close and appreciative contact of these two groups difficult. There is between them a slight, if invisible, barrier. It is partly due, as we have been saying, to a half-unconscious exclusiveness, on the one hand, and shyness and sensitiveness, on the other. It is more due to the fact that both groups represent very young men who are not yet used to adapting themselves to new standards and habits and points of view. If we were to continue the dangerous practice of labeling these undergraduate bodies, perhaps we might call these men of the second group the conscientious provincials of the college.

Finally, there is a third group in the academic community, and the one which, on the whole, interests me most of all. It is made up of those boys who have had no desirable social or financial inheritance. They have come, unaided and alone, right from mills and factories, machine shops, farms, homes of day laborers, to the col-

lege. They have had to earn every penny which they have ever possessed. They have enjoyed their summer vacation by means of peddling books — dreadful, useless books, whose extortionate prices are in inverse ratio to their actual value! Or they have sold aluminum kitchen utensils, or sweated in a hay-field, or rung in fares on trolley-cars, or superintended the digging of a city ditch! They have, indeed, done any and every task which chance or inquiry might offer to their grim energy and hot ambition. Thus they have got together enough money to present themselves at the college in the fall. To their untutored eyes it appears to offer the very bread and wine of life for their eager and famished spirits. But these boys have no easy, gracious manners. They have no *savoir faire*. They do not know the accepted social patter of their college time or class. Usually their clothes don't fit, and their hair is either too short or too long, and their hands and feet are preternaturally big. They are awkward and self-conscious, and either tongue-tied, on the one hand, or overloquacious, on the other. But they are, for the most part, able and determined youth, richly endowed with the fundamental things of masculinity, will, energy, resource, mental keenness, daring, and perseverance. These are the men

who form the third characteristic group of the college, and they might, sometimes, be called the conscious and bitter provincials of the institution. They know what hours of anxiety and lonely uncertainty mean. Whether or not the college education is worth what they have to pay for it is a serious question with them, for they pay high. They are come up for business. Frankly and naturally, they try to get the best, and as much of the best, as possible. Nor do they infrequently carry off the severer and more excellent prizes of undergraduate life.

Up to the college, then, autumn by autumn, come these three groups. They all feel, to some degree, the elements of uncertainty, self-distrust, secret ambition. All of them, in the beginning, move about in worlds not realized. But there is a general and vague opinion among them that the college is a democratic place. They have a sort of secret hope that there each of them will gain automatically, just by being enrolled on the books of the institution, the coveted measure of recognition. Every man who is a classmate will, in some way, be a friend and a brother. Yet they are not perfectly sure of this, and there is something of challenge, and something of distrust, in the way in which the incoming Freshmen furtively eye one another. Nor is it altogether sur-

prising that they are not sure of it. We have pretty well given up using cant in the world of religion, but it is still extensively employed in most other places, and, when we all so assiduously cultivate this idea of the democracy of the American college, it may be questioned as to how much we really believe in it ourselves. And perhaps, then, the first question which the incoming Freshman has a right to ask is what we mean when we talk about student-democracy, and how far the undergraduate body does really exemplify it.

The first thing which the youth should understand is, that we do not mean, by democracy in college, a mechanical equality of recognition, granted to every youth merely by virtue of his matriculation, irrespective of his character and his ability. This is an impossible and sentimental ideal of democracy, of which there is a hint in the famous phrase which eighteenth-century French philosophy wrote into the Declaration of Independence — that "All men are created equal." That phrase is untrue, on the face of it, in a world whose chief factor of progress is its inequality. It is, I think, of considerable importance, in these present days, for the boy in college to understand that the desire for such mechanical equality is now, and ever has been, a form of the essential vice of aristocracy,

and that it offers no basis for real and lasting brotherhood. For an aristocracy means a group of men who are arbitrarily given fictitious standing in the community without regard to their personal endowment or their social services. There are certain organized movements, of widespread influence to-day, which are endeavoring to keep the capable man down, that they may level the incapable man up. These movements are proceeding, almost exclusively, from the bottom of society, and are generally regarded as successful expressions of democracy and brotherhood. As a matter of fact, they are just the reverse. They are a new working of the aristocratic principle in its worst form. It is just as vicious to set up artificial equalities in the place of natural inequalities as it is to create artificial inequalities in the place of natural equalities. Democracy, then, either inside or outside the college, does not mean any arbitrary equality of personal standing. Here, as elsewhere, a man must strive for mastery!

But what democracy does mean is equality of opportunity. Hence it tends to intensify rather than diminish human differences, just because it gives to each man his full opportunity of self-expression. Whatever place, therefore, you hold in college will depend on yourself! The

motto of democracy is, "A fair field and no favors and may the best man win." Now it would, I think, be untrue to assert that a college community, even imperfectly fulfills the democratic ideal. But it is probably true that there is more of such democracy in our colleges than anywhere else. This, indeed, we should naturally expect for several reasons. To begin with, during the first three quarters of the nineteenth century the colleges were almost entirely recruited from the American public schools, where all the boys and girls of a community grew up in natural and simple association from their childhood. The influence of these early homogeneous and democratic groups is still operative through various institutions and traditions in college life. Then, admission to our colleges is quite independent of any conditions other than those of moral and intellectual fitness. In a sense it may be said that the college is as democratic as the civil service; since any man may enter who has the minimum of character and can pass the examinations and can pay his bills. But most of all, the college tends to be a place of fairly even-handed social justice, because the principle of democracy is native and grateful to youth. It is well for all men, as they enter college, to remember that no normal boy, who means to keep his own self-

respect, desires anything further from his classmates than a fair chance to test out his own person and to display his own mettle. To a real but limited extent, then, the college may be considered a democratic community.

But the moment one is really inside the gates, this democracy seems, at least, to be more theoretical than real. For when the boy, coming from any one of these three groups which we have described, begins his Freshman year, he finds the college to be a microcosm, a miniature world within the greater one, and very like unto it. There is, indeed, a generous recognition of worth among most college men, and an instinctive willingness to take a man on his merits and to ignore or despise superficial or accidental handicaps. Nevertheless, social politics are not unknown in this young men's world, special privileges have their place, personal ambitions are intense, pride of person and place runs high. What, then, is the boy to do? He knows that now he is not preparing for life, but, rather, that he is beginning life itself. He knows that the struggle for self-mastery, and mastery of the respect and allegiance of others, is not to come by and by, but is now upon him. He knows that the first test of his personal power is not academic and intellectual, but social. Where is he going

to stand? Upon what plane in the college world is he to be found? Like every normal boy, he wants to get to the top. What is the fair and the successful way to do it?

Well, speaking generally, there are two ways of winning this personal distinction in college, even as there are two ways outside of college. First, you can make social standing and personal popularity an end in themselves. Thus you can join the great army of "climbers," to use Clyde Fitch's expressive and repellent phrase. You can buy or induce a coveted place by directly utilizing your family's social prestige, or your father's cash-box, or by moulding yourself servilely on the undergraduate opinion of the moment. Thus, of course, you repudiate that democracy which you had hoped to find and on which you had meant to lean. Thus you reveal that it is not the principle of brotherhood and equal comradeship which you really desire, but, rather, what you may perhaps gain for yourself through the operation of that principle. Many men in college, it must be frankly admitted, expect to win their social standing by directly bidding for it. For this reason they run with the crowd, adapt their ideals and habits to the trend of the day, and make a sort of weather-vane of themselves, being always true to the current of the moment, and

hence never true long to anything. That this is a real and widespread undergraduate practice is evidenced by the vocabulary which it has created. In one university such socially ambitious men are called "heelers"; in another "swipers"; in another, "followers." One is inclined to believe that this ignoble, climbing passion is indigenous to all middle-class life. That is one great reason why educated youth, who are elected to be leaders in our national existence, should set their faces against it. It is rather striking to recall that the two benefactors of this Republic, its chief stay in the beginning days of '76 and its savior in the worst days of '61, came from the two extremes of the social scale. One was an English gentleman, in the best sense an aristocrat to his finger-tips, George Washington. The other was a son of the soil, the gaunt and awkward rail-splitter, Abraham Lincoln. Both were possessed of the sacrificial spirit. Both had insight, patience, courage, public-mindedness. Both won their place of power by their intrinsic worth and by the unquestioned value of freely rendered service. But most of us are members of those classes in the community which have left the bottom, where the stark realities, the immediate needs and elemental struggles of life, keep men kind and human, and

have not yet reached the top, where self-interest no longer obscures the vision, and where inherited social experience teaches men to distinguish between real and fictitious values. Therefore, we tend to think more of personal advancement than it is worth. Is it not worth while to remember, at the very beginning of one's college course, that there are many men and women to whom immediate social recognition means more than independence, generosity, conscience, even honor?

We should not, therefore, be surprised that not a few men, perhaps without confessing it to themselves, make social standing in college an end in itself. They attempt to reach it by ignoble and futile ways, upon which we must touch now for a moment. I spoke, in the preceding chapter, of the inextinguishable romance, the unconquerable idealism, of college life. These things are its essential characteristics, but there is a sordid side to all this young, communal life, which we must acknowledge if we are to be rid of it. The unpleasant immaturity of the undergraduate nowhere more glaringly shows itself than in his eagerness to be known and esteemed by the prominent men in his class, his naïve pleasure, when they think sufficiently of him to call him by some familiar name. The assiduous cultiva-

tion of the popular and the socially successful is always a hateful trait, but it is doubly hateful in young men. The ardent, generous comradeships of youth, which are among the holiest and loveliest things in mortal experience, are all degraded when this instinct for self-advancement is allowed to make you disingenuous in your personal relationships. It is enough, to quote John Donne's phrase, "To make one's mind to chuckle, while one's heart doth ache," to observe some of the lads in the graduating classes of our preparatory schools making ready for entrance into the college in the ensuing autumn. One remembers the Scotch boys and their worship of the university, the austere intellectual ideals which it inspires, the awe with which they regard it, the respect which they feel for themselves as members of it. Then we turn to some of our American youth, who think of their colleges chiefly in the terms of the social and commercial opportunities which they offer. Is the college glorified in their minds, as the place where they shall know the truth and dream dreams and see visions and have the fountains of the great deep broken up within them? No, there is no such admixture of romance and intellectual idealism in their calculations. On the contrary, these prudential striplings debate chiefly the location

of their academic residence, and the relative merit, meaning largely the amount of social prestige, of various fraternities. They choose their allegiances and activities with a view to desirable social propinquities and useful friendships — a rather damning word that, "useful" friendships! The chief office of the college would appear to be to start them wisely and well on a social career, to be a sort of male finishing school, where they may get to know the right kinds of people! Is it likely, if you are such a lad, that you will ever touch the heart of your college, or find your own heart in it? Do you suppose that thus you can contribute anything precious or distinctive to its spirit? Is it likely that you, so influenced, will become a man there? Snobbishness and subserviency, to the real, though limited, extent in which they exist in undergraduate bodies, are as futile as they are unnatural and repellent. We shall never make poets and heroes, prophets, scholars, scientists, and leaders, by any such processes.

Wherever, therefore, the natural and innocent desire for social recognition assumes such abnormal proportions that it is permitted to obscure the sense of justice and to lessen the moral and personal independence of the individual, there results a tragic waste of human material. When-

ever personal advancement is made an end in itself, it destroys the native idealism of youth. You who are moved by selfish and prudential motives thereby lose that power of insight into the heights and depths of life which is the natural inheritance of your years. You will go through college never knowing or developing your own genius, slight in your achievement, commonplace and obvious in your impulses, never getting beneath the surface, contented with a sort of sordid playing upon the crust of life. The comradeships to be prized are all born of that deeper awakening life which lies beneath comradeship. If your college friendships are shrewdly and skillfully manufactured; if their bonds are vulgar and immediate self-interest, a lively sense of benefits to accrue — then they will be as superficial and impermanent as the tie which creates them. We all know how the world glorifies and surrounds with inexhaustible romance the Davids and Jonathans of life, the poetic friendships of youth with youth. We all have had our own secret, wistful dreams of the Emersonian friend. What lad, in the morning of life, has not hoped to gain for himself a comradeship so complete and intimate that for him Aristotle's definition should be true, and one soul should appear to inhabit the two bodies. Well, such friendships

are real. They are among the supreme gifts of the gods. They may be had. They are the great and abiding relationships, surviving all those chances and changes of this mortal world which will begin the very day your college course shall end. But they are only possible because of the generous idealism, the faith, and the honor of youth. They are born of the absence in you of sordid, prudential, ungenerous calculations. When, while in college, you are living your best life for all it is worth, living it perhaps foolishly and recklessly, but with intensity and sincerity and freedom, then, in the liberation of personality which that kind of life implies, your whole nature is opened up. Then deep calleth unto deep, and there leap from man to man the new fires of aroused and eager spirits, and in those unquenchable fires of spiritual intensity the lives are welded into one.

Some one has acutely remarked that one of the depressing things about the social situation, in many undergraduate communities, is that it shows an immense sociability which rests back upon such commonplace bases. There is, among you all, a widespread absorption in boyish and trivial interests, a sort of irresponsible and unintelligent levity, a restless and unreflective activity, without depth or steadiness, not directed

to large and inclusive ends. Is not this impoverished social life partly the product of the motives which govern your social choices and of personal ambitions which are not always worthy of youth? At all events, let us be sure of this: the man who makes social standing in college an end in itself may sometimes get what he wants, but it is never worth the getting. For the permanent and adequate satisfaction of the social needs and aspirations of an awakening life can never be found in exclusive, ungenerous, artificial standards and ambitions.

But there is another way to win personal recognition and that confession of your value to the group whose natural and legitimate reward is social preferment. If you want personal success in college, and the rewards which follow from it, — and you have a perfect right to want them, — then remember this: those rewards are real, and honestly won, when they come as by-products. They are permanent and satisfying only when they are the accompaniment of an efficient, developed undergraduate life. Standing is incident to worth. Place is the reward of value. If you succeed in being valuable, you will not find yourself in a corner. The trouble with the "climber," with the merely socially ambitious boy, is that he wants a place in the

community for which he appears to have no solid qualifications, and that is why his position is precarious and his person despicable. But if you aim at the fullest development of the highest and best life that a college community might naturally produce, then, in so far as you attain that, you automatically attain honor and place and power. Now, that characteristic undergraduate development and achievement should be sought along two lines, the human and the academic. Every good college exists for the express purpose of developing the humanity of its students and of making them into clear-thinking, mentally efficient persons. If you are wise, therefore, you will expect to command the respect and admiration of your fellows, not by doing what they want, but by being to the fullest extent of your power what, in the long run, they all want to be.

Let me explain what I mean. I have said that the characteristic development of life in college is found along two lines, the human and the academic. Let us take the first of these, the human. When the college world is regarded not as an arena, where one fights or schemes for immediate personal advancement, but as a frank and vigorous society to which one is eager to be a contributor in whose willing service

one may hope to find one's self and place, then the road to the fullest and happiest development is clear. For then, as you face these three groups of men of whom we have been speaking, you do not value one of them at the expense of the others, nor try to decide into which of the three you will endeavor to enter, but you are eager to know the best that inheres in them all, and get your fullest development under the varied stimuli of each. Hence you try to be broad and universal in your friendships, not in order to win place, but in order to develop and satisfy the wide and varied needs of your own and your comrades' life.

Never permit yourself then to draw your friends largely from any one group in your versatile and fascinating community. If you want the best self-development, make friends among all sorts and kinds of men. Choose representatives of every variety of youthful excellence, especially of those kinds of excellence in which you yourself are deficient. One of the chief opportunities of undergraduate life is the chance which it offers you to acquaint yourselves more or less intimately with a cross-section of the American life of your generation. And what great gifts the lad struggling up from the bottom, lifting himself by sheer self-initiative and ambition, has to offer the rich

man's son, who, unfortunately, has never been obliged, in all his life, to drink the cup of effort to its dregs.

I remember a characteristic passage touching on this point, in the autobiography of Nathaniel Southgate Shaler, long the beloved and picturesque dean of the Lawrence Scientific School in Harvard University. He says: "Here let me turn aside for a word concerning the grim aspect of our so-called education, which makes it well-nigh impossible for our youth of the higher classes to have any intimate contacts with men who may teach him what is the real nature of his kind. He sees those only who are so formalized by training and the uses of society that they show him a work of art in human shape. He thus has to deal with his fellows in terms which are not those of real human nature, and thereby much of his own is never awakened. He may live through long, fair-appearing years, yet fail to have the experience necessary to humanize him fully. I have known many an ignorant sailor or backwoodsman who, because he had been brought into sympathetic contact with the primitive qualities of his kind, was humanely a better educated man than those who pride themselves on their culture. The gravest problem of civilization is, in my opinion, how to teach human

quality in a system which tends ever more and more to hide it."

Now human quality is just what you may learn, if you will, in the varied society and the relative democracy of the college life. Choose your friends, then, no matter in what group accident has placed you, among the men who in inheritance and environment and equipment are unlike yourselves. Let them be not your counter parts, but your complements. The gilded youth has no idea of the delight and satisfaction to be found in close association with the boy in whom poverty and struggle have braced the will, sharpened the senses, made vivid the imagination; and, is it not also beautiful to contemplate, the son of fortune who thus admires the elemental virility of his simpler comrade, has no idea of how much he has to contribute to him.

Here, then, is the first step toward a worthy and stable social recognition. Be generous and cosmopolitan in your friendships, and be thankful for the extraordinary opportunity for that kind of friendships which the American college offers. Never has there been a time when that word of advice could be more justly given to our undergraduates than now. For the temper of our national life is increasingly that of a world-citizenship. International relations of all

sorts, commercial, diplomatic, scientific, literary, and religious, are drawing men together into a conscious and welcomed unity. Modern methods of transportation, the celerity and ease of oral and written communication, contribute to this sense of world-relationship. The mind that to-day is only aware of local interests, narrow and traditional standards, is increasingly out of place. The unadaptable, untraveled sense, accustomed to associate reality and worth only with the immediate, the certified, and the familiar, is increasingly obsolete. Artificial and ungenerous personal standards, therefore, are rapidly disappearing, and the social provincial is really an anachronism. One of the significant aspects of the present American life is the nation's awareness, as a nation, of the world and its relationship to the world. The race-vision has come into its own, and begun to play its part in business, diplomacy, education, and religion. Nearly every note in the art, literature, and drama of the moment presupposes and commends the widest sophistication. You would do well, then, to begin now on the splendid task of making yourselves, in the fine sense, citizens of the world, open and appreciative in your attitude toward all other human beings and devoid of petty social prejudices. For the first step to-

ward that full development, whose accompaniment is the coveted personal recognition, is the choosing of your friends on the basis of their varied and intrinsic worth as men, irrespective of station, clothes, manners, or their present stage of sophistication. Believe me, nothing is more certain to bring, both now and in the future, the just esteem of your fellows, influence and recognition among them, than a wide and generous acquaintanceship with your own generation, a magnanimous and appreciative approach to all other men. If you have this wide and generous humanity, exercising toward those with whom you live and whom you meet a sincere and positive personal interest, almost any and every other deficiency will count for little.

And, surely, in the light of what we have just been saying both the possibilities and the perils of the fraternity system are clear. The fraternity is not necessarily an undemocratic institution. Wherever bodies of young men have been gathered together more or less permanently, they have tended to separate into groups based upon kindred tastes, aims, and interests. This was true in the days of the mediæval university, where students divided into so-called "nations," drawn together by ties of race or clan. It is seen in the "Studenten corps" of the German uni-

versity, in the Common rooms of Oxford and Cambridge. With us, such groups take, in most colleges, the form of Greek letter fraternities. The charters of these college clubs embody high if vague ideals, and their so-called secrecy, to-day more apparent than real, appeals mightily to the adolescent mind, and is probably a helpful factor in the fraternity life.

But it is only through wide and inclusive choice of contrasted types of excellence that fraternity life can be kept wholesome and can be made an aid, not a detriment, to the best self-development. Wherever a man's friendships are limited to his Chapter, he misses precious opportunities. Wherever his interests in the fraternity are selfish and immediate, rather than generous and social; wherever the fraternity is conceived of as existing off the college, not living for it; and wherever this cosmopolitan and democratic ideal does not act as an important principle of selection in choosing its members — there the fraternity is a detriment in the personal life of the youth whose social development it thus restricts to narrow and conventional lines, and there it is a detriment also to the college whose *esprit de corps* it thus diminishes. It is of importance, I think, quite as much for fraternity men as for the "neutrals," that there be cordial

cooperation and much mingling between the two groups. It is also important that fraternity membership be not considered as an end in itself, but as offering a prized opportunity for furthering the human and social welfare of the entire college. It is always depressing to see a young man strive hard to make himself worthy of a certain coveted fraternity or club in his college, and then to see him, when he has made the club, stop, lie down in it, so to speak, and feel that there is nothing more for him to do. When this is true, it would have been better for him and for the college and for the society if he had never heard of it.

Here, then, is one honorable and effective way in which a wise youth attains personal recognition. He does not strive for it as if it were an end invaluable in itself, but he deliberately develops in college wide, generous, simple human contacts. His aim is the fullest self-expression, rather than any particular standing as the reward of that expression. But the very humanity which he gains by these wide contacts becomes his chief social asset.

And, secondly, there is another direct way which contributes surely and honorably to the personal standing of the undergraduate, namely, the academic. This means doing well in your four years the thing that you were sent to college

to do, cultivating your own intellectual power, and serving the college in some characteristic academic way. For it is true of undergraduate life, just as it is true of all life, that in the long run men are recognized on the basis of merit. It is also true that eventually that is conceived of as being most meritorious which is most in keeping with the central and abiding purpose of the institution. Now, your institution exists to awaken and develop mental power. If, then, you can learn to do some one thing well along literary, dramatic, scientific, scholastic lines, that will bring you the respect and attention of your peers.

Therefore, were I a Freshman entering college to-day, I should not merely make it my business to be catholic in my friendships and utilize all the common, human opportunities of undergraduate life. I should also set to work to develop every ounce of intellectual power, and to exercise every particle of mental energy, which I possessed. So that before my sophomore year was ended I should be able to say, "I can do something definite with my mind, and I can already do it pretty well." Most of you are obsessed with the passion for athletics, and intoxicated by the spectacular prominence which the athlete gains. But in the nature of the case, such prominence can only

come to a very few, and for most of them it is a very doubtful blessing. You fail to realize the social power, the personal prestige, which accompany solid and severe achievements. If, in any one of the half-dozen departments of intellectual activity, you find that through some natural aptitude you can make a definite contribution to the common intellectual good, focus your serious energy and attention there. Do not do this primarily to the end of personal preferment. Do it for the enrichment and advancement of your college, and for the satisfying of your own intellectual self-respect. But you will certainly find, that, in just so far as you can really show yourself, in any department of learning, something of a scholar and a thinker, in just so far the coveted personal recognition and standing will begin to come. No man who really becomes the friend of his generation and a genuine contributor to the intellectual values of his time need fear that he will be obscured or misunderstood or forgotten. When nations or institutions have particularly serious tasks on hand, they invariably resort to the democratic principle in choosing their leaders. That is, they value men, then, for their actual powers and their solid attainment. He who can is then king. Developed personality and disci-

plined powers are then the guaranties of leadership.

So, if you want social standing and personal recognition, they will come, not when you directly bid for them, but when you largely forget all about them, and strive for those bigger things the reward of whose achievement, the effect of whose attainment, is the respect and honor of your fellow men. It would be well for every Freshman if he could have written up over the door of his room, where each day of his fateful beginning year it would meet his eyes, "*College life" is never valuable or real when it is separated from college work.*

It is true that the college fosters, and with entire propriety, social and athletic interests and activities. But the college does not exist for these things. It exists chiefly for humane learning, for self-development through scholarship. It exists to reveal and commend a sane and thorough intellectual approach to manhood. Without scholarship, the reason for the existence of the college disappears. Excellence in the characteristic field of the college, then, means excellence in learning. Excellence in learning, therefore, is a chief means to excellence in undergraduate manhood. The best man in college is always he who best fulfills the purpose of the institu-

tion of which he is a member. You were sent up to your *Alma Mater* to do two things — to become a man and a scholar. If you are both a man and a scholar, your standing in any academic community is assured.

CHAPTER III

THE FIGHT FOR CHARACTER

In a once highly valued and now largely forgotten book, which contains some of the most perfect examples of condensed and dramatic narration which our race has produced, there is the tale of the tragic end which befell a king, who was the founder of a dynasty and the first monarch of his nation. The record reads: "the Philistines fought against Israel, and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines and fell down slain in Mount Gilboa. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him, and he was sore wounded of the archers. Then said Saul unto his armor-bearer, Draw thy sword and thrust me through therewith, lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through and abuse me. But his armor-bearer would not, for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and fell upon it." Thus, says the tale, there perished, by his own hand, one who had been called to be a king, and the sword, which was the insignia of his rank and the instrument of regal opportunity, became his implement of self-destruction.

Now it is not without design that we recall this ancient tale at the beginning of this chapter. It would be impossible to write a series of talks on undergraduate problems without giving a central and significant place in them to the moral struggles of youth. For the college stands for the development of character. The salient distinction between the college and the graduate school is that the first aims at the development of the whole nature through intellectual and humane discipline, while the second takes a selected group, to whom the college has given the prepared mind and the matured person, and adds to their cultivation, erudition. It is because we believe a man to be more important than a scholar that we think the college to be more important than a graduate school. The creation of manhood, then, through intellectual and moral discipline is the significant task of the institution. Therefore the problems of self-control in youth must occupy some large share of the attention, both of those who teach and those who are taught in it.

For manhood may be summed up in terms of self-mastery. The achievement of manhood means, very largely, the discovery and liberation of moral power; the coördination, under a disciplined and intelligent will, of the physi-

cal appetites, the mental capacities, the spiritual hungers, of the individual. Such personal power most normal men ardently desire. The imperious or the imperial strain runs in most masculine veins. Therefore this discovery and development of personality, which is so intimately bound up with character, is perhaps the most precious, as it is the most difficult, office of the college. I say difficult, because it is so closely connected with the personal life and with self-control in the intimate realms of physical desire and sensuous delight. Any man who is ambitious for his future, who desires, in his brief moment of time and space, to play some significant part on the world's stage; any man who, in his secret dreams, prefigures his life to come, out in the distant hurly-burly of the world, as something that is to be apart and notable; any such man would do well to begin by remembering that the highest forms of personal power are, at the bottom, moral; that control of desire precedes control of self; and that control of self precedes control of men.

And, as we approach the moral problem of youth, which we thus see to be the problem of personal power, we come to it both with a sympathy and with a solicitude unlike that which we bring to any other human perplexity. For the

worst in men, in this moral realm, is as a darkened mirror, which obscurely shadows forth the outline of their best. The tragedy of the spoiled and beaten lives in youth exactly parallels the tragedy of Saul. These lives have become what they are because the very instruments of their opportunity have been turned into implements of self-destruction. For youthful vices are chiefly the perversions of virtues, the abuse of excellencies. They represent, for the most part, not forbidden and unlawful tendencies, but, rather, the highest and most valuable instincts and capacities of the race, abandoned to license, and directed to forbidden or unworthy uses. It should never be forgotten, and, it is always well for youth to understand, that the intensity of the natural hungers and desires of a man's life is usually in direct proportion to his personal capacity. These very instincts, if honored and controlled, are the shining instruments of his destiny. But if, instead of being revered and conserved, they are dishonored and exploited, their motor impulses wasted on trivial or perverse or sensual ends, then they become the consumers and ravagers of life, and the accelerations of irremediable disaster.

This is well illustrated in one of the common undergraduate vices, that of gambling. The

innate love of taking a chance is one of the most valuable instincts in our sex. It is that love of high risks, that lure of the uncertain outcome, that fascination of the unknown, which has given to the race its explorers, its frontiersmen, its military and political leaders, even its prophets in science and ethics and religion. When expressed and satisfied in such kinds of lives, the love of taking a chance is a high trait of great social value. For it is then utilized for honorable, imaginative, socially valuable ends. But the youth who will spend an afternoon or evening shuffling and dealing and playing cards for stakes is giving to that fundamental and honorable instinct a trivial expression and an unworthy use. This is why gambling is fundamentally indefensible. The pity and the wrong of it is that so high a trait should have so inconsequent an expression. Money is power. To risk money for no large end is to waste power. To waste power is an economic and moral misdemeanor.

I had occasion, not long ago, to visit a room in one of the ancient dormitories of my own college. It is a hall in whose chambers, for two centuries, the greater sons of the college have lived, and from whose portals they have issued, like sons of the morning, to play their parts in their day and generation. As I passed

through the entry, the door to one of these historic apartments stood open. The room within was smoke-filled and close. A group of youth, of a rather loose and unbuttoned appearance, were lounging about a table, noisy of speech, and vulgar in posture, playing for some trivial stake at cards. Two hours later, on reëntering the building, I saw the same group, still engaged in their severe and elevating occupation, and, as I passed the door, one young vulgarian flung his trump upon the table, coupling with the gesture the name of the Galilean. Outside was a clear and glorious winter afternoon, the untrodden snow inviting to the hills. A hundred paces away was a great university library, like that of Alexandria of old, offering the sifted treasure of the feeling and thinking of our race. In cage and gymnasium were a thousand opportunities and incentives for masculine exercise and sport. Living all about the room were a great company of men and youth seeking the high and gracious things of life. But these striplings, sent up to the college to become university men, trusted and endowed by its company of scholars with freedom and with leisure, could only imitate the grooms of the stable who while away a vacant hour by matching coins with curses in the harness-room. Here, then, was a sordid and

vulgar abuse of fundamental instinct. Here was a careless wasting of that rarest and most precious thing in American life — leisure. Here was a playing with power. We all honor the adventuring instinct. You will need all you have of it to meet gallantly the strifes and uncertainties of mature existence. Conserve and strengthen it, then, by serious exercises toward great ends. Do not exploit and dissipate it. The love of risk, controlled and developed by being directed to moral and humane purposes, will make a man of you. But this same instinct, degraded to the risking of money, and that for no real end, except the whiling away of time, or the covert and dishonest hope that thereby you may get something for nothing, will become for you not an instrument of power, but an accelerator of disaster. Let us all glory in the daring and the fearless spirit. Let us cultivate the love of risks that are risks. Let them make a Ulysses, a Balboa, a Darwin, a Marconi, a Grenfell, out of you. Let them make you into a hero, not degrade you into a gamester.

And the same thing is true of the youth who has habituated himself to seeking pleasure in the use of intoxicating drinks. Drunkenness, to speak in plain and bitter English, is also, to some extent, an undergraduate vice. I have no con-

cern just now with the question as to whether there is any actual food to be derived from the use of alcohol. For that is not a matter of opinion, but of fact. And surely none, even the most casual of you, can be ignorant of what the facts are. But I should like to again remind you that the very genius of youth, its characteristic excellencies, are degraded and wasted, even repudiated, when, at your age, you confess that intoxicants are indispensable to personal enjoyment. It is only abnormal and defective youth who might be expected to crave such stimulants. For you are beginners, you have your unsated emotions, your unspent physical and nervous energy, the enormous capacity for natural and simple pleasures which belongs to the morning of a human life. Physical vigor, intellectual freshness, spiritual sensitiveness, which are the native attributes of youth, require no artificial stimuli. Hence, every time you turn to extreme and artificial pleasures and stimulations, you betray your own youth, and confess that you are prematurely old. Is it not rather humiliating, for a young male in his late teens or early twenties, to have to acknowledge that there is so little red blood and reserve nerve force in him that he really cannot enjoy his existence without imbibing enough alcohol to

quicken his heart action and pump abnormal quantities of blood into his brain? I can conceive, although I would rather die than come to it, that there is some excuse for our elders, they who are old, worn, perhaps *blasé* and disillusioned, they who have lost the gifts of the gods, and must now be whipped up to their pleasures, when they depend upon artificial stimuli. But does not a man who stands untried and unspent on the threshold of his life feel that he owes it to his very youth and that inner self whose guardian he is, and whose testing has not yet been made, that he does not descend to the whips and spurs which the old and the broken-down and the worn-out have to use before they can make life tolerable? To do that means the confession of premature failure. The drinking youth tacitly admits that he is willing to lose the race before he has ever begun to run.

The struggle for self-control in this matter of physical appetite, then, is not an arbitrary obligation imposed upon you from without by pious parents or meddling deans or ecclesiastical organizations. It is an obligation of your own being. In every age of the world it has been characteristic of the truly masculine spirit that it has preferred and chosen a frugal, almost austere, living and environment. It was the

Duke of Wellington, was it not? who all his life would sleep upon his soldier's pallet? This tendency in men is largely due to their realization that indulgence softens and vulgarizes the individual. Now, surely you are ambitious. Of what use to be born a man if you do not mean to serve and lead? But the price of your coveted power is concentration of will and mind and desire on simple, sober, and exacting things. You see, then, why society quite justly condemns drunkenness as a vice. It is a vice because it is self-inflicted injury.

And so we come to the central moral strife which, in one form or another, is eternally waging in the heart of youth. It issues out of the imperious sex impulses, out of the ever-new, ever-mysterious relation of a man to a maid. There are many ways in which the world tries to help youth to control and victory in these, the most intimate, most desperate and significant of his conflicts. And most of these ways are futile, because they are prudential and commercial. And prudential and commercial motives can make small headway against the hungry, mounting desires of inexperienced and unexhausted lives. When one is dealing with able and promising youth, of large potential capacity, of how much use is it to warn them that to walk the primrose

path of dalliance does n't pay, that the physical risk and the nervous exhaustion are too certain and too great? I remember listening, as an undergraduate, to a "medical lecture," given by authority to my classmates and myself. I remember that it filled me with physical and mental nausea. I learned some things from it, not so very many, that I did n't know and did n't want to know. I thought then, and I think now, that detailed physiological and pathological information on sex matters, related to youth in public meetings, is a grave mistake. I am sure there will always be some youth who will regard it as a personal insult. Knowledge of all these things will not keep a worth-while boy from wrong-doing. Timid and prudential considerations are only operative with timid and prudential people. They may act as secondary, cumulative, deterrents, or they may show one how to endeavor to sin with impunity. The natural safeguard against these sorts of vices is modesty, and profound, innate distaste of them. There are impenetrable and proud reserves which are a native heritage of well-bred, masculine youth. To break down these reserves is a brutal and an indecent thing. The natural help to self-control is a youth's own sense, if his elders will let him keep it, of the sacredness and mystery of natural processes.

That knowledge of his self, and the perils and possibilities that attend the awakening of self, which the father imparts to his son may be carried as a precious talisman through the storms and the fights of youth. The revelation of a father's comradeship and a father's understanding, the meeting of parent and child on the inner and sacred ground of their common being, the intimate and tender instruction received from the nearest and the holiest lives we know, this will fortify youth as will nothing else against degrading and impure practices. But the sex hysteria, still raging in this country, is only explaining vice by way of exploiting it. It is so intermixed with commercial motives, morbid sentimentalism, and semi-salacious curiosity, as to be chiefly abhorrent to a well-bred, high-minded youth.

Yet just such youth must battle with the fiercest of these temptations, nor will commercial virtue, nor fear of physical consequence, nor the threat of public opinion, nor a merely inherited morality, suffice to carry them through their fight. It is one of the moving paradoxes of the moral life that it is most often the ablest, finest and most sensitive spirits who must, with grim intensity, wage the fiercest battle to gain the captaincy of their lives. There is a little verse

among the published writings of John Henry Newman, he of the delicate nervous organism, he who was a mystic, a scholar, and a saint, which bears pathetic witness to the lots of thousands of his fellow human beings:

"O, Holy Lord, who with the children three
Didst walk the piercing flame;
Help, in those trial hours which, save to Thee,
I dare not name;
Nor let these quivering eyes and sickening heart
Crumble to dust beneath the tempter's dart.

"Thou who didst once Thy life from Mary's breast
Renew from day to day;
O might her smile, severely sweet, but rest
On this frail clay!
Till I am thine with my whole soul, and fear
Not feel, a secret joy, that Hell is near."

Now, obviously, if we are to talk of the moral struggle, to men who know what the experience is which these lines indicate, then the talk must be lifted far above physical processes and semi-professional advices. For the youth who battles hardest with sex temptations is precisely he who is well aware of the moral indefensibleness and the physical peril of his position. But these lesser and secondary considerations are inoperative in his case. He cannot be sufficiently moved

by the abstract appeal to prudence, or right, or good sense. In place of all this, what most youth need to help them in these fights is an appeal to their holiest imagination, to their deepest and tenderest instincts. They need not the condemning, but the glorifying, of these desires which threaten to destroy them. We should be wise enough to give a man a vision of the power with which a controlled and conserved desire will endue him. To these lads who, it moves us to remember, have had as yet not one of the essential experiences of human life, we should present the future, and make them see what precious and significant satisfactions of their natures await them there. Above all, we should try to show them that it is in these very instincts, when they are controlled and honorably satisfied, that leadership and worth themselves reside. Few men can successfully repress their natures. But a man may so revere his nature that in his high regard for it, and for its largest uses, he will control and subdue it. Youth best fights the sins of the flesh, not by hating the instincts which underlie them, nor by being ashamed of those instincts, but by so prizing them that he refuses to drag them in the mire of unbridled practices.

In short, the initial thesis of this chapter is

markedly true in this area of the moral conflict. Here, of all places, sins are to be clearly distinguished from those excellencies of which they are the perversions. Vice is vice here, because it is the abuse of virtue. It rests with you whether all the awakening forces of your lives, proudly acknowledged and honored by you, shall be the instruments of your coming opportunity. If they are not that, they are certain to be the implements of self-destruction. But surely all of us have high and daring ambitions. We mean both to give and receive honor from our fellow men; therefore we propose to first honor ourselves. Surely this is the word for the promising lives who are weary and disheartened with the battle against sex temptations. You must so prize and exalt the forces and hungers within you, to which these temptations are witnesses; you must be so certain that these very imperious desires are among the chief and noblest assets of your life, that therefore you cannot exploit or dissipate them now. And may I hold up before you, for the remaking of that high vision, four great lines of power, four avenues of influence, which self-control in these matters opens up to you, but which the lack of self-control automatically closes.

First: The obvious foundation of all real

personal power is self-respect. But it is certain that he who surrenders to these temptations despises himself. True, he may disguise by ingenious sophistries the nature of his deeds. No one is better versed than the self-indulgent boy in making his mind, not his friend, but his accomplice. But beneath all the specious reasoning and self-deceit, there is always the protesting cry of his own nature, the shame and sorrow of his own soul. Inevitably, therefore, in such moral surrender he gradually breaks down his self-respect. Whether or not the things he does are known to any one but himself is quite immaterial. The dreadful and the damning thing is that he knows that he does them. Whenever men dishonor their bodies by grave abuses; whenever, for the sake of a moment of nervous ecstasy, they divide the inner Kingdom of Life against itself and outrage their own souls, they thereby shatter their very personality. Whenever a man will give himself up to indiscriminate and common usage, he becomes as contemptible as the hideous vulgarity of his practices. Whenever a man, obsessed by passion, will expose the most intimate sanctities of his person to any chance stranger whom he can hire with a few dollars to permit him to do so, the effect upon self-faith and the disintegration of personal power

are appalling. Whenever men are willing to offer the very secrets of their being to another human life with which they have no previous acquaintance, with which they have nothing in common, except the quickly recognized bond of their mutual secret lust, then they cannot expect either to believe very much in themselves or to be able to inspire confidence in others. The agonies of remorse and contrition into which youth react from these unbridled practices are the clearest indication of their devastating and consuming effect upon the will and spirit. They make sincerity of personality impossible, and with sincerity is relinquished power. For what life is more futile than that which is distracted within by the dissipations without? The loftiest form of power is character. "What you are speaks so loud, men cannot hear what you say." The first condition of character is self-respect, without which there is no basis for character. And, we may add, for you who stumble and grow weary, and are quite discouraged in the fight, that character brings, so soon as you begin to achieve it, its own exceeding sweet reward, a reward that is more than a recompense for all the darkness and helplessness and shame which lie behind. Few experiences of expanding youth are more precious than the first conscious

dawning of the sense of self-control, the growing experience of moral mastery. This experience the youth carries out with him, into the long succession of his gradually lessening conflicts, as his talisman and shield until the day dawns when he knows what Dante meant when he wrote in the "Purgatorio," —

"And thou shalt see those who contented are within the fire,
Because they hope to come, whene'er it may be, to the blessed people."

Second: The next great liberation and expansion of personal power comes with the function of the lover. The great romance, which is the natural and precious heritage of youth, awakens and develops personal capacity as does no other experience in life. On some not too-distant day, it is to be hoped that you will meet that woman who will have for you a bright significance to which no other human being can ever approach. You will see in her the very epitome of all that is fairest, most honorable, most desirable, in this mortal world. And you will hunger for her with all your heart, and the joy of that hunger will not have one taint of misgiving or of self-reproach. It will not be your badge of shame but your crown of honor. And, if you are really grown up and a man, when that day comes, you

will take to yourself that newly discovered life, and say, "I know you, and have known you ever since first I was; and I have searched for you all these years, and now I have found you, and life is complete and you are mine. You are my woman, and I your man, and I am going to give myself to you forever and forever. I relinquish, O my woman, my body and my mind and my spirit, unto you." And she will be the clear candle, shining for you in the dark country of the world. When you look into her eyes, you will see mirrored there, not what you are, but that transfigured being which she thinks you are. If you say to her, "I am not this which your soul sees," she will answer, "You are this very thing. My love sees deeper than your self-distrust." And so the inspiration of that companionship, the reinforcement of that faith, will develop in you insights and capacities, a versatility of worth and a nobility of spirit of which, without her, you would never even have dreamed. And then, through long and many-colored days, and crowded, weary years, you will yet live, a completed man at last, finding yourself in your mate, and in the children springing by your side.

Now this is the supreme gift of the gods, multiplying indefinitely your personal powers and your abiding happiness. These, a wife's faith

and a child's affection, are the refreshments of life which neither the changes of time nor all the envious blows of fate can take away. But all this, which means the very liberation of the soul, is not given by life to third-rate men. If your lives have lost their capacity for romance, what then? Suppose you no longer have the power to idealize our human world! If you have lost that mingled reserve and frankness, modesty and courage, which belongs to unspoiled youth, you cannot make this generous surrender, nor know the glorious madness of a supreme passion. If you have thrust profane and unscrupulous hands into all the mysteries of life, so that everything is known, and your eyes, too old, look unabashed into every corner of the world, and nothing is left in holiness and reserve, you cannot thus believe. There are men who, in these days of dawning life, are willing to make any horrid experiment for the sake of a new sensation. But life's revenge on them is terrible and sure. For when their supreme hour comes, and they meet at last her who might have been the rose of all their world, they are either unable or unwilling or afraid to love. That, I should suppose, is the final depth of masculine humiliation. And, with that inward moral defeat, breaks the mainspring of their power.

Surely, then, in talking of the moral problem to the able and valuable youth of any college, that which it is truest and most decent to say to them is this: "Of course, to you, the light and peace of moral victory is indispensable. Of course, you will fight for that, even though it be with a broken sword, and with your back against the wall — fight until you win or die! For you look forward, being able men and true, to that day when, through your marriage, you shall, with inexpressible joy, enter into the meaning of love. You foresee the morning when, holding your own son within your arms, you shall have finally arrived at your majority. When his frail and tender baby hands reach out to yours, and his helpless life, unknowing and unconscious, is laid in the hollow of your hand, for you to make or mar, then you will be recompensed for all the discipline of the body and the travail of the spirit." We are too apt to associate supreme worth and sacredness only with the conventionally religious things of life. Therein we make a great mistake. The most sacred places of our world are not the monasteries, nor the cathedrals, nor the ancient shrines, nor even heroes' graves, nor the soil that is all compounded of the blood and dust of martyrs. The sacred places of the world, as a great New England minister

has recently said, are those where children are born to an honorable lover and his true beloved. It is toward such holy places that you now should worship day by day and night by night.

Third: Another source of vital influence and personal power is found in the happy carrying on, into the burdens and conflicts of middle age, of the freshness and simplicity of youth. The best men are only boys grown up. The great servants and teachers of the race, said Phillips Brooks, have been its simplifiers. They have lived for a few, indispensable, natural human things; they have brought men back to fundamental values and to first principles. It is always true that the men, who are found sufficient when difficult and critical tasks are to be done, are those sublimely simple souls who have retained the heavenly capacity to see life in the large, to grasp its out-standing values, and to ignore the thousand modifying and confusing considerations which paralyze their lesser brethren. There are, Brooks continues, "men whose first healthy instincts have been developed and enriched by wide human contacts without altering their character in the process." They are still natural, uncomplicated, ingenuous, and this makes them potent among their fellow men. For that which wins the allegiance of our brothers

quickest, is not intellectual superiority and personal sophistication. They dislike the one, and they distrust the other. It is rather a frank and ready idealism which attracts them, a sincere and candid sentiment, the absence in us of self-consciousness, or of finical considerations. Greatness often means just the preservation of these primary qualities. There is a kind of fine provincialism which high and simple men retain. A man may be catholic in his sympathies, accomplished in activities, cultivated in his appreciations, adept in all the better ways of human intercourse, and yet be easily moved to admiration, to laughter and to tears, and find, in the voice of a child, the smile of a woman, the sound of the sea upon the beach, the wistful cadence of a song, that which still sets all his blood on fire in his veins and girds his will for a thousand times ten thousand strifes. A man may be every inch a citizen of the world, at ease wherever men may be, and yet have so retained his natural sentiment that he cannot forget that distant place where his forbears are buried, nor forego the hope that, when the tumult and the shouting die, and the last ounce of energy is expended, and the last thought hammered out, he may lie, at the end, among his own, his dust mingling with that of those from whom he came, with whom he is at

home. Such simplicity and charm of spirit, such continued sensitiveness to elemental instinct, means carrying the naturalness of the child and the spontaneity of the youth on into the strenuous and complicated career of middle age. And it is more precious than words can tell. Great men, every year they grow older, find that life moves them more profoundly. Hence they are able to move it.

But, here again, the basis of such simplicity and spontaneity of temperament is largely moral. Nothing so surely destroys it as premature or unlawful grasping at the supreme experiences of life. Because it is born of an inextinguishable faith in the essential goodness and beauty of the world, and this faith in the world is born of faith in one's self. Those who delight in life are those who have not exploited life. The boy who is most sincerely to be pitied, in any college, is he whose eyes are already opened to the evil in his associates, who already sees the canker in the rose of the world. When you begin to see life in the light of common day, then the common fates are yours. The tragedy of immoral living, from this point of view, may be summed up in a word. You have exchanged your youth for your pleasures; you have lost your naturalness in your sin; indulgence has killed your spontaneity; and,

in dissipating the rosy vision of the world, one instrument of power has slipped from your hands.

Finally, there is a fourth source of personal power, the rarest, widest, and deepest of them all, which is likewise inexorably bound up with the personal issues of the moral life. This is the power of a capacious humanity. There are two ways in which we use the qualifying adjective "human" in reference to other people. The first way is common enough. We often say of a man that he is a very human sort of person, to indicate his gift of meeting easily and pleasantly all sorts and kinds of men and women. We have all seen public persons, or politicians, who were people's men, easily accessible, shrewd in their judgments of human nature, affable and good-natured, adroit in adapting themselves to every possible situation. Out of an easy democracy they appeared to be the genial and ready comrades of all sorts of folk, and quickly established points of contact with very diverse groups of people. This is a common and not a particularly significant endowment. It has no necessary connection with personal character. There are men of all sorts and kinds of character, or the lack of it, who possess it. Indeed, the experience of the world has not been altogether happy with this type of person, and men tend to associate

with this power accompanying traits of shrewd expediencies, intense personal interests, and baser adaptabilities. The world has grown to distrust men who, chameleon-like, take their hues from the environment of the moment, and very rarely does one feel in such men the quality of greatness. It seems worth while to say all this, because the "popular man" is so deified by youth, and yet, not infrequently, he is a rather dubious person.

But there is another, far higher and rarer sense, in which a man may be said to be a great human being. There is a quality of public-mindedness, quite inseparable from moral idealism, which, if a man has it, at once lifts him into leadership. One American, Abraham Lincoln, was supremely possessed of it. You remember the phrases that Emerson uses regarding him: "Lincoln is the true history of the American peoples in his time. Step by step he walked before them; slow with their slowness, quickening his march by theirs; the true representative of this continent, an entirely public man, the pulse of twenty millions throbbing in his heart, the thoughts of their minds articulate on his tongue."

This, then, is what I mean by the power of a capacious humanity. Such men are in intimate

and potent touch with the world, not because of any facile adroitness or cultivated amiability, but because of the amount of human nature to be found within them. They incarnate, so to speak, their time. Their lives are ample and sincere and inclusive. They are of a sublime generosity, an amazing faith; they have great depth of insight and inexhaustible and patient sympathy. Narrowness or hardness or selfish pride of life are beyond their comprehension. The artificial and the conventional are unknown. They live in the abiding realities of our human nature, that nature of which Goethe said that, while mankind was always progressing, man himself remains ever the same. Thus they are able to interpret, in the terms of their own experience, all the lives which they touch. Do you think there is any higher power than this, to be able to cover, in thought and feeling, the human world before you! To be worthy to stand for the common human nature of your day! Is not such complete understanding and interpretation of human lives the ultimate end of education? Is there any limit to the gracious usefulness and power which such an endowment gives to the individual? But, once more, we are to remember that such power is primarily moral. It springs out of an all-sufficient, inexhaustible idealism.

It is maintained by the faith and the purity of the individual. It cannot be separated from a native nobility of soul; its very elements are service and sacrifice and unselfish love.

Now, there are such men who may truly be called the friends of their race. Wherever in the various departments of human effort they are found, they are as great rocks in a weary land. To them their fellow men turn to renew their faith and vision, to find their power and their peace. What would it not mean to you, O youth, beginning college days, with all the freedom of your youth upon you, if you, in the years to come, could enter into the life of your generation with such profound and noble understanding of it, and bless it with your power! Is there any mark of greatness more veritable than this, ability to identify yourself with your generation, to interpret and inspire and empower it? And is it not worth while, remembering how all these avenues of powers are closed to him who betrays himself, for you now to begin to say, "I will stand in awe, and sin not. I will commune with my own heart on my bed, and be still?" For surely I do not need to tell you that such visions of humanity, such conservation of the powers and the insights, the freshness and the faith of youth, are only the portion of the undefiled.

CHAPTER IV

THE RELIGIOUS INSTINCT AND THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

When the youth approaches the religious problem of his time and race, he enters the most fascinating area of all human experience, the area where men's noblest instincts gain their expression, and where their motives take their rise. In no other department of human thought and effort are men so poignant in their convictions, so bitter in oppositions, so nobly tenacious of position. Nowhere else does feeling run so high, or is the mind more abused or exalted, or the will so completely exercised. This is because the religious instinct is so universal and so precious to the human race. Men guard their religious habits and ideas as they guard few other things, because the experience of countless generations has taught them how indispensable they are to power and to peace. There is a real sense in which men may be said to be incurably religious; and religion, as distinguished from various religions, is the common experience of us all.

Now, nowhere is this experience more keenly felt than in youth. Indeed, the great religious

leaders of the race have been, for the most part, young men; and the greatest of them died a youth of thirty-three. It is a silly prejudice, therefore, which conceives of the college student as irreligious, and such a conception is the reverse of the truth. Nearly all youth are instinctively and profoundly religious. Of all people in the world, they most feel the inward urge to discuss the fundamental questions and to attack the insoluble problems. No one ponders more sincerely than they over the origin and the destiny of our race. Ancient, organized expressions of religion do not always interest them. The ruling passion of youth is for freedom, simplicity, and sincerity. Therefore, wherever conventionalized religious forms appear to curtail freedom, or to be substituting expedient policies, disingenuous or elaborate systems, for a sincere and simple faith, there youth is quickly in revolt. But the capacity for religious experience — more than that, what we may call the spiritual sense — is very rarely absent from normal young men and women. Often it most clearly shows itself in these very protests against expedient and outworn religious symbols. When a man, therefore, is talking on religion, there is no one from whom he could be more sure of a sympathetic and interested hearing and a large

measure of common understanding than the undergraduate.

As we approach, then, this problem of perennial and universal interest, I should like to try to do three things; first, to state what this universal religious instinct is; secondly, to give the Christian expression and explanation of that instinct; and, thirdly, to point out what, in the light of the teaching of Jesus, is meant by the Christian doctrine of salvation. We begin, then, with the instinct itself, which, together with the desire for food and clothing, and the sex hunger, is one of the three fundamental, motor impulses of the race. Henry Scougall gave a popular definition of religion many years ago, when he called it "The life of God in the soul of man." Max Muller has a better definition, when he says, in "Natural Religion," that "Religion is the perception of the Infinite, under such manifestations as are able to influence the moral character of man." Now, what does this mean? Two things chiefly. It means, first, that our race has a dim but stubborn sense of the delusive and inadequate nature of temporal things and mortal experience. There is an ineradicable conviction, found among all nations and kindreds and tongues, that the world, which seems to lie before our mortal vision so real and bright and

true, does actually gain both its substance and its significance from immaterial and unseen powers. The solid walls, the lofty roof, all which the hands can touch, the eyes can see, and the tongue can taste — this is but the insubstantial pageant of a dream. It is the ever-changing and obscuring expression of a changeless reality which pervades it all, but which is not to be identified with it, for it was before it, and will be after it. To use the language of Oriental philosophy, our visible world is a vast and varied veil; it is a cloud, an entangling mesh, behind which, keeping watch within the shadow, stands the higher Something-not-Ourselves which makes for righteousness, the Providence or Nemesis of the world, the gods, whom, as Lucretius said, "All men fear, but all men yearn after." In every age great souls have voiced this awareness of something above, beyond, and without, from which they themselves, and all which they saw and knew, derived their significance. This experience, in the terminology of religion, would be called the belief in a god or gods. Men have sung their song or proclaimed their message or compassed their achievement with the clear perception of its incompleteness. They have known that they were moving about in worlds not realized. They have chafed at the limitations

of time and space and mortal sense. They have been conscious of being haunted by an elusive and flying goal, which disturbed them with a glimpse of more permanent and final things. It is this perception of the inner and unchanging reality, which is quite independent of time and space, which has been the hope and inspiration of our race. In every generation, men have found strength for the battle and peace for the pain by seeing our inscrutable human life as an interlude in that fuller, freer reality which was before it, which shall be after it, which to-day lies roundabout it. They have found the key to Nature, the interpretation of man's physical environment through regarding it as the expression of a supreme intelligence beyond it all. Nearly three thousand years ago there lived a poet who wrote, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork." Another who said: —

"Whither shall I go from thy presence,
Or whither shall I fly from thy spirit?
If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there.
If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Even there shall thy hand hold me
And thy right hand shall lead me."

In 1798, in England, Wordsworth published in the "Lyrical Ballads," perhaps the most significant piece of verse of the eighteenth century, in which this same instinct finds another of its myriad expressions. You remember the lines in "Tintern Abbey": —

"For I have learned to look on nature
Not as in the hour of thoughtless youth,
But hearing oftentimes the still, sad music
Of humanity, nor harsh, nor grating,
But of ample power to chasten and subdue.
And I have felt a Presence which disturbs me
With the joy of elevated thoughts.
A sense sublime of something far more deeply interfused
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns
And the round ocean and the living air
And the blue sky and in the mind of man.
A motion and a spirit that impels all thought,
All objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things."

It is this perception of the Divine which has created our philosophy and maintained our metaphysic. It is this which lies deepest in human hearts. It makes the warfare bearable and the days tolerable. It makes men eager to live, yet nobly curious to die. The foundation of all human hopes and dignity, the source of racial reverence and faith, is this perception, that One like unto a God, untouched, lofty and serene, walketh with us amid the fiery furnace of our life.

The second element of this religious instinct is the sense of perplexity and bafflement and uneasiness which accompanies this perception. Men know a God, but they seem to be removed from Him. They feel the Eternal, yet they tend to fear and hide themselves in the presence of the Eternal. Indeed, man's ever-failing but never-ending struggle against baffling odds, to grasp and understand and live with the Divine, is the most noble and tragic expression of our race. For between the two, the Eternal Spirit, unseen but felt, and the hesitant and uncertain spirit of a man, there would seem to be a great gulf fixed. Desire, insatiable, unwavering, looks out from the eyes of each generation of our race. It is this incredible intensity and persistency of striving and longing which is both the tragedy and the glory of our common lot. The mainspring of human activity, the creative impulse, from which, in devious ways, all the thousand-hued motives of our lives proceed, is revealed in the ancient cry, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." That unquenched thirst for Him underlies all human life as the solemn stillness of the ocean underlies the fretful waves. This is what William James called the uneasiness of the race, the sense of something being wrong about us as we naturally stand. It is this which

has built the altars, prescribed the penances, and made the pilgrimages. Out of this have grown the rites and ceremonies, the scourgings and renunciations of the various ancient faiths. From this unquenched thirst, this profound uneasiness, the immeasurable volume of human prayer has issued, bearing up to heaven, through uncounted generations of the race, the vision and the anguish, the love and the tears, of our common humanity. The pathetic readiness, the guileless eagerness of mankind, to give its faith to any occult and mystic thing, from table-tipping and palm-reading up through the long, sordid, tawdry list to the present popular methods of praying to one's own thought and hypnotizing one's own self — these all bear witness to man's persistent but uneasy endeavor to grasp and be reconciled with this elusive spirit. "The dynamic of the world is the sense of the divine reality." The woe of the world is man's inability to discover and appropriate that reality. All human sorrow originates in the sense of being apart from God or the things or the children of God. You, when you shall have entered truly into life, will perceive, beneath all the glitter of its brilliance and its genius, underneath the roar of its energy and achievement, the note of melancholy. The great undertone of life is solemn in its uniformity

of pathos. The poets and prophets of every age have seized unerringly upon that melancholy undertone. Sophocles, long ago, heard it by the Ægean, and it inspired his somber dramas of the turbid ebb and flow of human misery. Sometimes the voices of our humanity, as they rise, blend and compose into one great cry that is lifted shivering and tingling to the stars: "O that I knew where I might find Him!" Sometimes, and more often, they sink into a half unconscious, subdued, and minor plaint, infinitely touching in its human solicitude, perplexity, and pain. You know how Arnold phrases that undertone in "Dover Beach":

> "Ah, love, let us be true
> To one another! For the world which seems
> To lie before us like a land of dreams,
> So various, so beautiful, so new,
> Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
> Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain,
> And we are here as on a darkling plain
> Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
> Where ignorant armies clash by night."

This, then, is the experience which you have inherited as children of the human race. In brief and conventional language, we call it the sense of God and the sense of sin. This is what we mean when we say that men are naturally religious. We mean that each generation has,

as a matter of fact, found itself born into a struggling, baffled, troubled world, a world aware of the Divine beyond the obvious, but also of some self-erected barrier which kept it from the Divine; a world caught in the snare of the seen and the temporal, but reaching out to the Unseen and the Eternal. The theologies and the philosophies, the faiths and superstitions, the sublime religious affirmations, the passionate religious negations, are all the products of this fact of human experience. Without it, the word "believer" and the word "skeptic" would neither of them have any significance, nor would they ever have come into existence. Both represent diverse interpretations of, contrasted attitudes toward, the common instinct of us all.

This, then, is religion. What, then, is Christianity? The Christian's religion is that acceptance and explanation of the human instinct which rests back upon the Person and the teaching of Jesus. Christianity takes this universal belief and makes two specific affirmations regarding it; sublime, or, if you please, audacious, affirmations. It asserts, first, that there is an objective Reality, which answers to this universal subjective instinct. There is a God, one true and changeless Spirit, out of whose depths issued your spirit and mine. That which

haunts the soul and will not let it be is not a delusion, a self-suggested, self-projected Being, issuing from our fancied need. It is the most solemn and potent of all realities. This is the basic and comprehensive message of the Christian faith. This will be your stay, when in the years to come you begin to struggle against time. That which invests the Church with her indefectible dignity and significance is that she stands as the witness that in the beginning and in the present and in the ending, from everlasting to everlasting, is God. He surrounds and interpenetrates and includes the life of every man and every thing. In Him all beauty, goodness, and truth exist forever and forever. In Him all beings, races, worlds, and universes live and move. Whatever we do He hath graciously made possible. Every successful endeavor is the permitted expression of his energy. Every true thought is a spark struck from the anvil of the Supreme Mind. Every pure hope and high desire is the breath of his holy spirit. Every deed and tendency of our daily life is real or unreal, significant or impotent, as it is in harmony or out of harmony with Him. Beneath and around all our ignorance of God is his intimate and inclusive perception of ourselves. Christianity begins with this proclamation: "O

men who dream of the stars and of your kinship with a timeless and imperial world, is it not a solemn and sobering thing to know that your dream is true!"

But Christianity does more than this. After affirming the reality of God, it has its own distinctive method of realizing that reality. Here we come to what is probably most salient and precious in the teaching of Jesus. Men have often thought of God in terms of a crude, physical anthropomorphism, as a sort of Oriental potentate, a projected political and material power. They often have conceived of Him in terms of abstract speculation, trying to make Him everything which man is not. But Jesus' vision of God is not in the terms of a crude, physical anthropomorphism, nor in the terms of the absolute, or of abstract *a priori* speculation. It is He who teaches us to endeavor to approach and know the Infinite by means of the ethical and spiritual experience of our race. It is not merely monotheism, therefore, but ethical and spiritual monotheism, which is characteristic of the Judaic-Christian faith. Jesus teaches that God is justly conceived of when we think of Him as the Eternal Father, Lord of heaven and earth, known to us in terms of redeeming and sacrificial love. This love is both supremely exemplified and

bestowed in Him. He is the God who loveth all his children with an equal and impartial affection, making his sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sending rain on the just and on the unjust. He does not dwell afar in some flaming sun of his mighty universe, a remote and stationary being, occasionally breaking into this world to manifest Himself in prodigious and inexplicable ways. But He is a present spirit, encompassing and infusing each particle of his creation. The Father of all, his love goeth out to embrace them all. Every man born into the world He follows with love from the beginning until the very end. No man need ever be weak, for the Father desires to perfect his weakness in his strength. No man need ever be consumed with restlessness and discontent, for the Father waiteth to endow him with the abundance of his peace. No man need ever be lost, because the Shepherd is always seeking his wandering sheep. No man need ever be discouraged by reason of the sins of his youth, for this is the Father who sees the prodigal coming a long way off, and runs and falls on his neck and kisses him. What, then, is the Christian content of this universal, divine perception? What is Jesus' idea of God? It is infinite spirit, manifested in the terms of redemptive love, a love so freely and

supremely given that, in the words of Jesus to the Samaritan woman, we know that God seeketh his true worshipers. It is redemptive love supremely exemplified in service, so that, in the touching example of Jesus, he who knoweth that he comes from God and goes to God will, in his supreme moment of God-likeness, gird himself with a towel and wash his disciples' feet. It is a redemptive love, which not only yearns over men, and delights to serve them, but will carry service to the uttermost point of sacrifice, so that they who are filled with this God's spirit, and are like Him, might, with Paul, wish themselves accursed of God for their brethren's sake, or might, with Jesus, hang forsaken of God upon a cross, for the sons of man.

How marvelous, then, original, audacious, and incredible is Jesus' interpretation of the common instinct of our race! The Spirit which haunts the world and will not let it be is not an angry, nor an imperial, nor an exacting master, but a beneficent Redeemer, revealing Himself to us in a single-minded, educative, reformative, constructive love. This God, whom the world has both feared and yearned after, is not a gloomy and transcendent monarch, dark with vengeance, resistless in purpose, unflinching in justice, grinding out the lives of evil men beneath the

chariot wheels of his inexorable law. He is not an arbitrary pagan God, a whimsical spirit, sporting impishly with his helpless and amusing creatures, feeling no obligations toward us, his manifold and minute creations, who crawl ant-like over our little speck of earth. Nor is He a sort of glorified St. Nicholas, sitting up there in the heavens, a vast and unethical Benevolence, smiling vacantly as He tosses out his indiscriminate gifts, his affection a lazy and indulgent fondness for men, like that which the cat shows for her litter of kittens. Men have often thought all these things regarding Infinity! But no! God is a moral Being, caring infinitely for us, and confessing his obligations towards us, because He has made us moral beings too. Our importance in the eyes of the Infinite rests in the fact that there is no relationship capable of being measured or appraised between material bulk and moral worth. Infinitesimal as we are, evanescent and futile as is the shadow of our day, we are yet precious to the Eternal, because his breath is within us, and we, like gods, can distinguish between good and evil. The interest of the Eternal Majesty, then, in us, is not an unethical love, which winks at sin, and cares not greatly if we break its laws, and trusts in man's automatic, ultimate arrival at righteousness. It is a

severe and holy affection, which has nothing whatever to do with sentimental or complacent or indulgent passion, a love whose content is service, whose method is sacrifice, whose goal is racial redemption, which is given to us not because of what we are, but because of what, through it, God has willed we should become. It is a love, then, so pure and holy that it will send every discipline and bend every will to bring men to desire that end to which they were divinely destined; a love which will send us into hell, a thousand hells, indeed, if that is what we need to make us willing to let the best in us express and come to itself. Only such is the mystery of the divinity of this sovereign and redemptive love that it elects to share every detail of the experience of its children, and will go into hell with us, suffering there a greater agony than our own, like the Jesus who for us men and our salvation knelt in unutterable and inexplicable anguish beneath the gray-leaved olives of Gethsemane. This, then, is the first thing in the Christian teaching. There is a God, man's instinct has played him true; and that God is known to the race, oh, incredible assertion, in the terms of holy, ministering, sacrificial love.

The second thing in the Christian teaching is this: Man who is uneasy in God's presence

may become reconciled to Him. He may find God and himself in God. It was the very intent and mission of Jesus, his conscious purpose in the world, to show us, that, from the very beginning, this is what God has desired, that always the Eternal Life has been flowing out toward us, and that we have nothing to do but to believe in it, accept it, and by its power live ourselves in the high realms of service, joyous sacrifice, and the loving spirit.

But how can we believe in such a God? How is it possible to have such a stupendous faith? Because of Jesus. The most wonderful thing in the finite world that we know is that He lived this God life. The things He said God was, He was. The life was, so to speak, incarnate in Him. This gracious and Eternal Spirit, obscurely seen and reached after in all the universe, came into our world, in an especial and ideal way, in Him. It may be said, without irreverence, that God, in so far as a human mind can grasp or need Him, became in Jesus an empirical fact. Jesus is, therefore, the world's hostage for its sublime belief. He came, an event in time and space, and was, this loving, serving, and sacrificial life. So we know such a life is real and possible, and possible even in this unjust and sorrowful world. For we have seen it here.

Jesus proves it. Indeed, He said, and if He had not said, men from their own experience would have known, that He came into the world that we might know that God is, and that He is the Redeemer of his children. This is why men have turned to Jesus as the One altogether lovely, as the One through whom, and by whom, they have been saved, to their eternal selves and their Eternal Father. It is, then, through Jesus, because of what He was and did, that we are able to believe. The noblest, happiest thing a human being ever does, the act which comprehends the very essence of faith and good will, is when he says: "I will believe in and return to God, for Jesus' sake, and choose for myself the spiritual life." For then a new power flows into his being, and then he begins to know the heavenly Father for himself. Then belief in God is no longer accepting Him entirely on faith; for then we have begun the verification by experience, and we know of ourselves and within ourselves that we are dealing with realities.

And this new proof from within substantiates itself by enabling us to live, to some extent, the God life of which Jesus spoke, and which He was. For, moved by this new spirit within us, we begin to be able to love our fellow men in the same way that God loves us, and to find our lives

in the sacrificial service of our race. It is Christians who prove the Christian experience, and, in every generation, there have been some Christians in the world. If we had only a Paul, an Augustine, a St. Francis, a Luther, a Wesley, or a Brooks, we should have enough to know that what Jesus said, and was, is true.

We begin to understand, then, do we not? what it means to be a Christian. It means to take the same attitude toward the world that Jesus took, and to love our fellow men with the same sort of love wherewith God loves us. Then we must serve men according to their need, not according to their desert, even as God has done more for the worst of us than the best of us could possibly deserve, and has thought more of the sheep on the mountains than of those secure within the fold. So we long to bless them that curse us; for how an evil, cursing heart needs blessing! Transformed, so to speak, by this vision of the eternal grace, the magnanimity of Divinity, we, too, pour out, for and around men, an unexpected, undeserved affection; we eagerly and gladly give them what no law could demand and no force could compel. We are patient with our brothers, we believe in them, we put ourselves in their places; we forget our comforts and our desires, in their wants and needs. We give

more to the worst of them than they would ever have dreamed of expecting from us, because we have found that our God is more willing to hear than we to pray, and ever giveth to us exceedingly abundantly, above all we could ask or think. We know, through practice, what was the principle of conduct in Jesus' mind, when He cried, in his vivid Oriental hyperbole of speech, "If a man ask my coat, with joy I give him my cloak also; if he smite me on one cheek, I turn to him the other, and if he want me to walk a mile with him, I go with him twain." For this is but a picturesque illustration of the Christian principle by which men have ever known the disciples of Jesus; the principle of the out-reaching, forth-giving life, the life which is only limited in its service and its comradeship by the perception of its neighbor's need or the extent of its neighbor's capacity to receive.

The Christian experience, then, is not summed up in conformity to pious practice, nor in the mere attainment of personal character. Indeed, the distinctively Christian experience can scarcely be said to have begun with the mere attainment of character. For discipleship of Jesus means character for service and salvation for the community. No one can be united with God unless, in principle and desire, one becomes like Him.

But to be like Him one must be the lover and servant of the race, just as He is the Lover and Saviour of the race. Union with God, then, is accomplished by oneness with humanity. If I love not my brother whom I have seen, how can I love God whom I have not seen? Hence, to be a follower of Jesus, means to be a lover of men. It means vicarious suffering, spontaneous, irresistible outgoing for less fortunate men. It means a poignant sensitiveness to human need, an unquenchable protest against human injustice, an unutterable yearning to supply deficiencies for the handicapped, and tenderest healing for the wounded. It means that you and I, restored and empowered with the divine love and light, ache with desire, burn with intensity to redeem with it our fellow men. Mazzini, statesman of the new Italy, had caught the Christian spirit when he said, "When I see any one called good, I ask, 'Who, then, has he saved?'"

"But," you will say, "is this Christianity? I thought to be a Christian meant accepting a certain plan of salvation; I thought it meant believing in the Virgin birth; I thought it meant subscription to the metaphysical doctrine of the deity of Christ. I supposed a Christian was one who held a certain view of the inspiration of Scripture. I thought Christian discipleship car-

ried with it the acceptance of one world-view. I did n't see how you could be a Christian, for instance, and believe in evolution. Besides, I supposed that for Christians there were certain things you could do, and certain other things you could n't do. Surely, Christianity means going to church and praying and reading your Bible and not being worldly. Why, I have even been taught that if you were a Christian, you might not dance or play cards or go to the theater. Is n't the Christian a sort of holier-than-thou person, who has to repress most of his natural instincts and go through the world a deadly respectable, hopelessly good person? The thing of which you have been speaking here is incredibly difficult, indeed, and almost unbelievable, but such a life would be so radiant and joyous, so high and true — there is something very deep in me that answers to it!"

No, the Christian experience is n't any of these things that so many earnest and reflective youth have imagined it to be. Many of these things are effects of it, but none of them must be identified with it. I have been at some pains in this chapter, in trying not to give you, so far as I could help it, any one of the many philosophies of Christianity. Of course, no one can talk about religion at all without implying some definite

view of men and the world which lies behind it. But I have avoided the theological terminology, and those many and contrasting intellectual statements of the faith by which each age has fitted it into its own view of the world. And I have also tried to speak of Christianity in the terms of the principles of action, rather than in those of specific conduct. For here, again, conduct will change from generation to generation, and the sort of life which expresses Christianity in one age is quite unlike the sort of life which will express it in another. I have been trying to give you the thing which lies beneath the theologies, which creates the philosophies, which finds its expression in conduct, namely, the experience of God in Christ. It is out of this mighty experience and the power of it that a new type of life issues, and that new type is Christianity. For the first thing we ought to understand about our faith is this: it is n't a form of ideas, and it is n't a form of words, and it is n't a rite. It 's a power, a mighty, spiritual force, sweeping down through the centuries in much the same way that the Gulf Stream sweeps through the Atlantic Ocean, carrying warmth and life and healing wherever it goes. That power is born of the incontestable fact of experience, that, in Jesus, men have it certified to them

that there is a God, even as their minds have foreseen and their hearts have desired; and that this God is such an One as was Jesus Himself.

Let me sum up briefly what we have been saying. The Christian faith issues out of the common background of our race, the sense of a holy God and a sinful world placed over against each other, as if they were separated. The sinful world, down through countless generations, has been afraid. It has thought that God was apart from it, had no care for it, was angry with it. It has tried to placate Him and bribe Him. It has given its firstborn for its transgressions, the fruit of its body for the sin of its soul. And then came Jesus. And the Christian message consists in his announcement of the kind of a being God is, and what such a God means to this kind of a world. God loves the world, and bears it on his heart. Our sin has not extinguished or dimmed the divine affection, but determined the form which that affection takes. The holy Being, who loves a sinful world, must desire to deliver it from its sin, since in no other way can He bless it, or have it for his own. Therefore, the passion to save is the characteristic expression of the love of the living God for mortal men.

We come, at last, to the third and final thing which we want to say. Just what is this experi-

ence of salvation which the Church in every age has taught? What is it that really happens to us; and does the same thing happen to all men, when we actually believe in the God of Jesus and relinquish ourself to Him? Here is a helpless, ignorant, sinful man. Now, what occurs in him, when, through Jesus, or for Jesus' sake, he returns to God? Always, in men's experience, three things. The first thing that he finds has happened to him is that he is come into a new relation, both to God and to his fellow men. He is brought out of his loneliness; he no longer has that sense of estrangement from God and of isolation from other human beings. The feeling of being shut up, within and to himself, vanishes. He is n't afraid any more; hence his powers are liberated, and he feels free, and can be himself again in the sight of men, in the open day. His shame is wiped away. He feels right once more and as if he had come to himself after a bad dream. For the moment he makes up his mind, on the strength of the testimony and the person of Jesus, to believe, and take the leap in the dark, and give up his will to this wonderful divine will, then he has the unspeakably precious gift of divine forgiveness. The guilt and the power of his previous wrongdoing have vanished. His surrender makes him one with God; therefore,

there flows into his life a great tide of joy and freedom and peace. The man has come home, and he feels himself at home in God's world and with every other human being. Then, next, out of these new relations, and the new motives and powers which they create, he gets a new character; he becomes a different kind of person. A great accession of moral energy is the result of this normal relationship with God and men. His personal and intimate touch with the living Spirit composes and heals his life, and makes it pure and simple and natural again. So little by little, old habits, ancient lusts, worldly and restless activities, are crowded out by the new life that is welling up within him. And, finally, these new relationships which issue in a new character, make him believe in a new destiny. They bring him in touch, so to speak, with another world than this, a world that does not fade, and does not change, the world that always is. For he has a very clear conviction that all that is happening to him now has little to do with his body or his mortality. It is n't a physical and material experience; it is moral and spiritual experience which is now transforming him. It is his self, his soul, as we say, that has been taken out of darkness and the prison house, and set free, like a joyous bird, in an infinite and untrammeled

world. So the man begins to believe that since he has found God, and a moral and spiritual life in God, he can no more die than God can die, and that, in so far as he wins to moral and spiritual values, he wins to things that are of eternal worth. This, I take it, is salvation.

How glorious a thing, then, is religion! How infinitely greater it is than any of its social or personal manifestations! Never again confound religion with mere amiable living or mechanical believing. Never identify it with even the most beneficent of its social activities. Never think of it as being concerned only, or chiefly, with the issues of this present life. Religion maintains itself in perennial power, because men have never been willing to believe that they belonged only to this present life, and have never been able to satisfy themselves with anything or everything which this life has to give. For always, when men have looked abroad upon their world, they have seen the inextricable mingling of good and evil, the mystery of its strife and pain and injustice. And always, when they have looked within, upon themselves, they have faced the inexpressible sorrow and loneliness of human life. Thereby they have been forced to concern themselves with the solemn questions which have to do with the origin and the meaning

and the destiny of the race. Where did we all come from? Did we come from anything? What are we here for? Where are we all going? Is there anything after this life which can possibly compensate for it? If a man die, shall he live again? And the Christian experience has a triumphant answer to these questions. Jesus and his followers say, "We know from whence we came. We came out from an Eternal Life, a loving and a gracious Spirit. And we know where we are going. We shall return to that from which, in the beginning, we came. In God we live, and move and have our being. In God we now exist, and we shall exist, forever and forever."

This is only words to you. No one of you can possibly know now, what it means. But such a conviction represents the sublime effort, the supreme achievement of the human race. Toward that conviction may you live!

CHAPTER V

THE EXCEEDING DIFFICULTIES OF BELIEF

We tried to describe to you, in the last chapter, what the Christian experience is. We saw that our human race is incurably religious; that nearly all men and women, in all times and places, have had a sense of the unknown, a hunger for God, a feeling that they were moving about in worlds not realized. We saw, too, that accompanying this intuitive awareness of the Divine was the sense of bafflement and perplexity and uneasiness. Men wanted God, but could n't get at Him; and they were more or less afraid and felt themselves guilty in his presence. The sacred writings of the world, the beautiful mythologies of Greece and Rome, the poetry, the drama, even the fiction of our race — all these bear an abundant and impressive witness to the life of God struggling to find an expression in the soul of man, and to man desiring, yet fearing, this life, and apparently unable to discover and appropriate it unaided.

On the basis of this widespread instinct rests the Christian faith. It gives to that instinct a specific sanction and a unique content. The

good news of Jesus is that there is a creative Spirit pervading all the world, manifesting Himself in everything we see and know and think and do; closer to us than our breathing, nearer to us than hands and feet; and that He is a loving and a gracious Spirit, having compassion for the children of men, assuring them that He hath made no barriers between their spirits and his; determined to serve them all to the uttermost. He gives his love to men according to their need, not according to their desert. He is more willing to hear than we to pray. He hath prepared for them that love Him such things as pass man's understanding. All that we have to do, in order to know and live with this gracious Spirit, is to believe in Him, open our lives to his influence, accept the forgiveness which He offers, and, loving our fellow men in the same way that God loves us, thus become citizens of the heavenly Kingdom. The reality of this loving, gracious, sacrificial Spirit is certified to us in Jesus. Jesus lived the thing He talked about. He was what He revealed. Men would never have dared to believe in a God like this if they had not seen Him made manifest in the flesh, in Jesus the Galilean. Hence men, for Jesus' sake, because of Jesus, trusting in Him, have said, "I believe it; I do believe there is a holy, potent, gracious

Spirit, and that my spirit belongs to Him. I do believe, since Jesus said so, and died to prove it, that the Father will forgive me all my wrong-doing if I will only come to Him. And so I am going to come." And then we saw that, when men do thus accept the Christian Gospel on faith, they are able to prove it is true in their own experience by the marvelous things which it does to them. For it gives them a new relationship, both to God and men. It brings them out of the feeling of loneliness, out of the sense of fear and shame. There is n't any experience any more of being apart from God or men. On the contrary, we know we are with Him, and we listen for his voice; we rest in his power; we are subdued and composed by his secret presence. Also it happens to us that when we thus believe, we attain to a nobler and a truer disposition. Faith makes a new man of us. There are new forms of self-expression and new motives. Apparently the old channels in the brain are wiped out, for ancient lusts and base inclinations disappear. Generous and noble desires take their place, and we find ourselves living unselfish and honorable lives. And, finally, this also happens to us. The whole experience of this new nature is in the field of the spirit; and it gives us the consciousness of a new destiny. Its values are

moral; and they so intimately ally us with what we think God is that we expect to go on in this free, unselfish, joyous life forever.

These are the marvelous things that happen in human lives, when, by this active belief in Jesus and the God of Jesus, men come into contact with that new power which we call Christianity. These things prove the reality and the validity of the Christian faith. They give the only proof of which it is capable, the verification by experience.

Now this is, as I see it, what it means to be a Christian. Most of us who read these words are already predisposed to accept all that the term "Christian" implies. Our inheritance and environment and training, all push us that way. Our very youth, with its mystic intuitions, which middle age loses and forgets, urges us to a high venture of faith. And yet hundreds of us go through college and lose our religion while we are there, and many and many an educated man wants to believe, but cannot. Can we, then, in these pages, get at any of the reasons why good men and true, naturally high-minded and spiritually sensitive men, find it difficult to say, with intellectual integrity and moral candor, "I am a Christian"?

I think those reasons can be grouped under

four heads. First of all, it is not surprising that many undergraduates lose their religion, for such faith as this makes a supreme demand upon both the will and the belief of the individual. It may justly be said to tax his credulity to the utmost. This assumption that there is a God, and that that God is love, that the underlying principle of the universe is sacrificial service, and that through this service men come into their real and satisfying self-expression — this is an enormous assumption. There is a great deal in human nature which appears to go directly contrary to it, and men instinctively dislike to believe it. Over against Jesus' statement that God is love, there stands another world-wide assumption, one which is much more native to the untutored human spirit and much more easily verifiable — the assumption that God, if there be a God, is force, is brute strength; that might is the only right. There are men who simply cannot accept the ultimate reality of this religious hypothesis of ours. They assert that the natural self-expressions and the durable satisfactions of life are to be found, not in the terms of service and sacrifice and love, but in the terms of self-will and material power. We are here to learn how to dominate our present world. That world is as a great arena, strewn with the wrecks

and débris of the ages, on whose torn and bloody sands each generation wages its own ruthless war. Soon our turn will come to struggle in that arena for the satisfaction of our desires and for our personal prestige. And in that struggle it must be each man for himself and the devil take the hindmost. Neitzsche is right. Power and domination are the goals of life. The strong man stands above the law, while he makes it for those beneath. A man, if he be a man, wherever he has the chance to consult his own will, takes it, and gratifies his will to the full. All this talk about service and sacrifice and stewardship, and about democracy and brotherhood, is the cant of the weakling, the sentimentalist, and the slave. Bismarck is our man. It 's blood and iron, not love, which makes a man a conqueror.

There is very much in our world to support this doctrine, which is the very antithesis of Christianity. On this view are founded all the ancient empires. It governs the politics of Asia and of Europe to this day. This was the faith of imperial Rome, the creed of Napoleon, and of the robber barons of the Rhine. This, too, is the creed of most American as well as European life. In diplomacy, in all sorts of commercial, international relationships, might is right, grab what you can; the strong man dominates, and social service,

and justice for the weaker nations, are just foolish fictions. The strifes which, for the last two years, have convulsed and devastated the Balkan States, offer a grim commentary upon the ascendancy of this principle of life, as much among the so-called Christian as among the Mohammedan peoples. This is the creed of our social world. The over-wealthy and the insolently worldly think that there is one code of ethics for them and another for the common man, and that, having money, which is power, they may do about as they please. Hence their speeding vehicles crush the unwary, and their domestic scandals furnish the salacious amusement of the proletariat. This is the creed of much of our business world. Wherever men get together huge aggregations of capital for private enrichment, and then proceed by unsocial and unjust methods to heartlessly push their weaker brethren to the wall, they thereby scoff at Jesus, and at his religion, and bow to Mammon and the flesh. This is the creed of the greater part of our social and industrial order. The feud between capital and labor is an economic feud, inexpressibly brutal, and wholly unmoral in its recognition only of self and might. The ruthless corporation exploits the bodies and souls of its employees, often determines their wages by their hunger,

and eases its own conscience and placates the community by the endowment, through its inhumanly gotten gains, of hospitals and colleges and churches. The laborer, in savage fury, strikes back, threatens the persons and the property of those above him, brings the bludgeon of the picket down upon the head of the scab, organizes a world-wide anarchy, irresponsible, futile, dangerous. It is all infinitely far removed from the person and teaching of Jesus. There are few indications of brotherhood or adequate sense of social responsibility in our industrial world. The old economy, that might is right, rules in both camps. And, again, this is the creed of much of our political life. Men use the stewardship of large funds for private gain. They use public office for personal aggrandizement, ruthlessly exploit the vast natural resources of the nation, lay heavy burdens of debt upon the shoulders of the coming generation, and consider that their opportunity is their sufficient justification.

Our world, in short, is not a Christian world. It would be transparent folly to so regard it, and most men don't believe in the Christian spirit. Ours is a fairly brutal, quite ruthless civilization, where nearly every man is out for the goods; where we want money, and we want power, and

we want fame and ease and luxury, and we don't much care how we get them, if only they are ours. Moving over the face of this materialistic and imperial civilization is the Spirit of Jesus, and on the whole He is making it kindlier and more decent with each succeeding generation. But the first great shock which comes to the young man who has merely accepted Christianity as a matter of course, and has regarded it as being actively and widely operative in modern society, is to find out what Christianity really is, how little of it, at any time, there has been in the world, and how comparatively little there is now. The world does n't believe in it, and Jesus was perfectly right when He said that you will have to set your face against the world if you do.

And yet I would bid you remember that for all this Christian faith is so sublimely unpractical, so difficult and audacious, and although it has made so little headway in two thousand years, nevertheless the best things in our contemporary life are those which are the embodiments of it. The foundation of our present civilization is the home, and every decent home you ever saw is built, not upon the imperial principle of might and self-will, but upon the Christian principle of service and sacrifice and love. Christianity produced what the child to-day calls "father"

and "mother." Christianity has made child life free and joyous. Again, the best things of the modern state are direct expressions of the Christian principle, and they show that principle to be extraordinarily potent and beneficent in action. The hospital, which replaces the casting-out of the sick and the infirm; the reformatory, which is replacing the prison; the old-age pensions, the child-labor laws and the minimum-wage laws; the determined attacks upon the drink traffic and the sex traffic; the economic and political independence which the community is about to grant to women, — all these are directly contrary to the old imperial principle. They are all products of Jesus' concept of God as incarnate love, and of the law of life as the law of justice and unselfish service. I grant you, therefore, that it is hard to believe in the Christian view of the world; for the world does n't naturally take to it, and most of the expressions of our civilization flout and deny it. Yet I would remind you that it is worth while to face this difficult Christian principle seriously, and courageously to try to achieve belief in it. For it is certainly true that wherever men have really given Christianity a chance and have actually lived it, either as individuals or as groups, it has transformed the face of human nature, and

made the wilderness to blossom as the rose, and brought back hope and courage, freedom and joy, and the voice of praise into our sorrowful human life.

The second reason, I think, why men are apt to lose their faith is that there is so much in the make-up of human life itself, and in the nature of the universe, its laws and operations, as we see them, which appears to be directly contrary to what we think we have a right to expect if it is true that there really is a God, and that He is a God of justice and of grace and of love. Human life is full of sorrow, full of injustice, full of pain and withheld completion. Pure hopes are being blasted every day, and high ambitions being denied, and fine spirits withered. More often the wrong than the right wins the cause. The beautiful and the noble are cut off in their youth; the vicious and the useless live on to old age. Children suffer; women weep. The innocent are sacrificed; the guilty go free. Nature knows no compassion and makes no discriminations. Like one vast and ruthless machine, the universe appears to go grinding on; and vice and virtue, aspiration and despair, seem to have no significance to any thing or any one except ourselves. How can any man who sees clearly the inscrutable injustice, the undeserved failures, the

unmerited sorrows of human existence, believe that behind it all, and dominating it, is a good and gracious and intelligent Spirit? The belief of primitive races in evil spirits seems to us intelligible enough. But can we, who know the world as it is, accept this concept of a holy and a loving God?

We must answer, frankly, that to believe in Jesus' God and Jesus' faith, in the face of much that we know of human life and of universal workings, is a great achievement. It is difficult; it takes a high vision, or a sublime madness, as you may choose to call it. The difficulties of belief are enormous. There are times when to every one of us they seem to be insuperable. Yet, I candidly believe that the difficulties of unbelief are yet greater. Christianity rests, as all the important affirmations in human life rest, back on an hypothesis. You cannot prove it, as you can prove an empirical fact, nor demonstrate it, as you can demonstrate a mathematical problem. We just assume that God is, and that He is this kind of God, and that, therefore, everything in his universe must eventually work out right. We assume that in the end He and we shall see of the travail of the soul and be satisfied. And this is what we mean by the word "faith," and by the insistance that faith

is indispensable to any real religion. But you are to remember that every view of the world rests back on faith; that Christianity is n't the only thing we have to take on trust. Every fundamental assumption in life is taken that way. We believe in the validity of human knowledge, but the belief is a pure assumption. We cannot prove it. We just trust that things are as they appear to be, and that trust would seem to be justified by the results that follow from our faith and by our increasing power to master the natural world. But we approach all phenomena of nature, taking for granted our fundamental assumptions regarding them, all of which are beyond any possible verification.

Now, the same thing is true in the realm of religion. No man should be condemned or scoffed at because he assumes a mindless order, a dead world of atoms or electrons, a mechanical universe, in which you and I are the product of chance combinations, in which our aspirations and visions and faiths are mere tricks of the mind, curious actions and reactions of the chemistry of our natures. No man can prove that materialistic view. Its disciple holds it in precisely the same way that you hold your religious view. He takes it on faith. Such a view of the world, it may justly be said, transcends reason, al-

though to the man who accepts it, it does not appear to go contrary to reason. And the only thing which Christianity asks of you is this: Since you have got to live by faith, anyway, it asks you to have faith in its view of the world. We cannot prove that view, neither can our opponents prove theirs. Belief in the Christian God is a leap in the dark. But all the fundamental assumptions, upon which the entire structure of human life is built, are also leaps in the dark. There is much in human life which appears to refute our faith. But there is also much in human life which appears triumphantly to justify it. How are we to explain the saints and the prophets, the reformers and the heroes of the world, the noble army of martyrs, the men who have laid down their lives for an idea, and given up their breath for love? How can we explain the obstinate questionings, the persistent visions, the moral strife and agony of the world, the insatiable spiritual hunger, except on our hypothesis? Most of all, how are we to explain Jesus, and the serene power, the moral splendor of his life? And so, we call the chessboard black, we call it white. There is as much reason on *a priori* grounds for having faith in God as for not having faith in Him. More than that, when you consider the quality and potency of the

human life that has accepted our hypothesis and achieved our faith, we think there is, on the whole, more ground for believing than for not believing, and that the men who see life clearly and see it whole, torn as they are by its strifes and sorrows, yet find the difficulties of belief less than the difficulties of unbelief. Most of all, we say, you shall know our faith by its fruits if you will but try it. How does it work out? And we think it has been incontestably proved, in the history of the races dealing with Christianity, that they who do sincerely and faithfully believe in Jesus and his God live happier and freer and fuller lives, are more able to express their real selves, find the durable satisfactions of human experience, are of larger service to the race, have power in the present, and peace as they look into the future. So that here, verification by experience justifies faith in the Christian view, in spite of its profound and abiding difficulties.

And never forget what faith is. Faith is n't believing in things you know are n't so. Faith is not going contrary to one's reason, deliberately stultifying or ignoring the workings of the intellect. Faith is a sober and candid acceptance of a fundamental proposition which, indeed, is not demonstrable, which transcends the reasoning process, or, if you please, goes beyond the bounds

of knowledge, but does not go contrary to known things. And faith is the common practice, the inevitable condition of all human life. It is as much a condition of action as the concepts of space and time are conditions of thinking. The difference between the Christian and the non-Christian is not the difference between the man who is weakly credulous and the man who holds his mind in vigorous and skeptical independence. It is purely the difference between two sorts of faith; faith in an ideal, intelligent world, full of beauty and truth and goodness, and faith in a mechanical, mindless order, concerning whose origin we have no theory to offer, concerning whose ultimate destiny we know nothing, and from which we may not hope for anything.

The third reason why men tend to lose their faith, in college, is because they confound religion and theology with each other. When their theology undergoes radical transitions, and they have, perhaps, to relinquish very much of it, they think that their religion must necessarily accompany it, and, as the Germans, in their quaint humor, say, they "throw out the baby with the bath." Religion is an experience of the inner life. It is our own personal awareness of God and self and sin; our own actual finding out, that when through Jesus we know God and

come to Him, sin is forgiven and we are set free. That is n't a theory or a philosophy or a science. It is a fact in human life, which generation after generation of men have known for themselves. It does n't admit of argument, it just is. Now, theology takes the facts of the religious experience and codifies and relates them, puts them in logical order, gives labels to them, explains their inferences, and fits this portion of our experience into the whole of our lives, sets these facts in their right perspective and place in any given view of the world. Theology has the same relation to religion that botany has to flowers or that physics and chemistry have to the material universe. Theology, then, is a science, of which religion is the corresponding art. Theology is a philosophy, religion the life which furnishes the material for that philosophy. Now, the life, the experience, the art of religion, are essentially unchanging. Where they change at all, it is very slowly, with practically imperceptible modifications in each generation.

But the science of religion changes markedly, as in each succeeding century men know more and more of themselves, and more of the world in which they live. All sciences change radically, unless they are dead sciences. As long as theology remains vital and potent, it will remain fluid

and progressive. Let me illustrate this. Always there have been the suns and moons, the stars and planets, all the splendor of the firmament by night. That 's an incontestable and unchanging fact of our material world. It has always been a part of man's experience. Now, we used to have a science of that firmament, and a quaint and picturesque science it was. It was called the science of astrology, and to it we owe the sportive signs of the zodiac. We used to believe that if a man was born under the planet Venus, he was an affectionate creature; or under Mars, he was a savage brute; or under Jupiter, he was a headstrong lad. Now, the whole science of astrology is as dead as dead can be. It was all wrong. There was nothing in it. Nobody but quacks and old women and some business men believe in it. But the firmament still remains. And now we have a new science of astronomy, and that, too, has been undergoing an important modification in the last fifty years, and its leaders are now engaged in certain ardent and most interesting controversies. In a sense, indeed, it is true that the sciences are always changing because the facts have always been there, and the changes themselves indicate that the facts are permanent and real.

Now, precisely the same thing is true of

religion and its corresponding science of theology. Down through two thousand years men have been working at the indubitable and transforming facts of the Christian experience. They have tried to state those facts in the language of their own generation. They have spoken of them, from the point of view of their own day. They have related them to the view of the world, of their time. They have given to them such varying emphases as the tendencies and needs of any given generation appeared to warrant. And, meanwhile, men's views of the world have been changing, men's chief points of need have somewhat shifted, men's ideas of God and man have enormously enlarged and clarified. And so, of course, their science of man's experience of God and of himself in God has changed and clarified, too. That is wholly desirable and quite to be expected. A science of religion, for instance, which presupposed that the Ptolemaic conception of the universe would be radically different from a science which presupposed the Copernican system; or, to come nearer home, a science of our religion built upon a dualistic philosophy would be quite unlike a science of that religion worked out when most men are, consciously or instinctively, monists.

Therefore, it comes about that when you go

to college and are introduced to a twentieth century view of the world, and find that many of the intellectual expressions of your religion are couched in a fifteenth or a sixteenth or a seventeenth or eighteenth century view of the world, then those intellectual expressions of religion seem to you unreal and inadequate, and to some extent they undoubtedly are. But that does n't mean that religion is unreal or fallacious or outgrown. It only means that you need to bring your science of religion up to date. Nor does it mean — and this, I think, it is particularly valuable to say to youth — that all the venerable and impressive statements of faith, although they are, to some extent, intellectually outgrown, are nevertheless valueless. On the contrary, they are of enormous value, both as testimonies to the faith of our fathers and as milestones marking the progress of the race in its search for a rational and intelligible expression of spiritual truth. The Declaration of Independence is a product, partly of French sentimentalism, and partly of eighteenth-century political science. Few of us believe its opening statement, that all men are created equal. None of us would want to take that Declaration as a political creed for the United States of this century, or make a mechanical

acceptance of it the test of political orthodoxy. But all of us revere and love it, and we know it is a great asset in our national life. We should justly protest if it were not still read upon each Fourth of July, to both the citizens and the children of this Republic. It was our first confession of national consciousness and faith; and it marked the beginning of a mighty era in the affairs of this continent. Now, there are similar corporate confessions of the Christian Church, notably the great creeds of Christendom, such as the Athanasian, the Nicæan, the Apostles' Creed, so-called. They are witnesses to the vigorous and potent religious life of our distant forbears. They mark mighty and significant advances in intellectual apprehension of religious truth. There were platforms, intellectual bonds of union, spiritual confessions, which held together the Republic of God, and under their banners it fought gloriously against the world, the flesh, and the devil. They have conserved and transmitted, from generation to generation, some of the most precious experiences of our human race. Therefore, we love to hear them read, or we love reverently to recite them, for just the same reasons that we love to hear the Declaration of Independence read. They are not mechanical tests of our intellectual apprehension of truth.

As scientific documents they do, indeed, appear to us to be extraordinarily able, having clear and amazing insights into the nature of God and the needs of humanity. Yet, of course, they are mistaken, and, of course, they are deficient, in part; for they come from somewhere about the third century, and we are the children of the twentieth century, and, mighty as were the minds who conceived those subtle, pregnant phrases, even they could not project themselves seventeen centuries beyond their time. We are, therefore, able to honor such creeds without mechanically accepting them, and, indeed, we believe that we are true to the intellectual power, the spiritual daring of their framers, when we push on beyond them, rather than cling to them.

And so you will find it true of much of your inherited science of religion, that it will need large modifications and restatements. Some things you will add to it, other things you will drop from it, as your view of doctrines changes, as this age makes its own statement of what it believes to be the nature of God and man and Christ and their relations one to another. But do not let this readjustment of your intellectual apprehension of religious truth dim the sense of the reality of that experience to which all this science is but the witness and of which it is but

the expression. There is a ponderous and antique phrase, I think it is Tertullian's, which sums up the whole principle: "Mutation of emphasis," he says, "involves no invasion of substance."

Never permit yourselves, then, to suppose that you need to cease to be a Christian because your inherited dogmas, the traditional formulæ of Christianity, are no longer entirely acceptable. Only discard them when, in so doing, you gain the freedom to come nearer to, and learn more of, the spiritual things of life. Still retain and cherish the experience of God in Jesus. Still rest on the impregnable fact of the moral power and the spiritual insight which personal communion with the Almighty has brought to you. Still will to do the will of God, and then you shall know the doctrine. Then, perhaps, you shall be among those who shall help you remake that doctrine, in glowing and effective utterance, for your time and generation.

The fourth and final reason why we sometimes lose our faith, in college, is personal and moral. Often, for instance, it is atrophied through disuse; we lose it just because we won't employ it. Moral inertia, spiritual laziness, beset us. The many distractions of college life crowd out the quieter and the finer things. The good is the worst enemy of our best. Therefore, we don't

live up to what we do believe. We don't exercise our faith; hence it pines away. One will never get more experience of religion until one has used to the utmost all that one has, even as one never grows in mental power until the mind has worked hard; and never increases in physical strength until every muscle is exercised to the utmost. Very many young men take their religion for granted and pay no serious attention to it, and then are surprised that they have so little of it. There is no small amount of religious doubt, so called, in college, which has no right to be dignified by that honorable name. It is nothing more or less than spiritual ignorance and mental triviality. It is not a thing of which to be proud; it is a thing of which to be ashamed. In the previous paragraphs of this chapter, we have been dealing with the great battlefields of faith, where strong men, and good men and true, on both sides of the contest, wage an honest fight. But the undergraduate doubt, which is born of religious indifference and intellectual laziness, has no place on those great fields. What this kind of skeptic needs is to take himself and his world more seriously, and he would do well to beware lest the world and life be as cavalier with him as he now is with them.

Again, there are many men who appear to be

unable to begin the religious life because they think they are n't good enough. This is one of the inhibitions which grows out of the invincible modesty of youth. I think we ought to add, however, such is the amazing inconsistency of human nature, that this quite veritable modesty sometimes goes hand in hand with a very vigorous self-conceit. These men apparently look upon the Church, or the college Christian Association, as being graduate schools for saints. But they are n't. They are rather kindergartens for sinners, and most of us could qualify quite easily in them. To call yourself a disciple of Jesus does n't mean that you know, but that you want to know; it does n't mean that you are now good; it means that you really desire to be good. Every man who goes out in the autumn for football does not, thereby, set himself up, in a superior manner, before the college, as claiming to be a proficient athlete. Nobody thinks that trying for a team implies athletic prominence or physical conceit. But a man becomes a disciple of football or baseball, and he goes out with the crowd and tries to follow his leader, and to learn, and grow through the trials which may confront him. So it is with following Jesus. To call yourself his disciple does not mean that you are a holier-than-thou person, or that you

are making the slightest claim to knowing very much about Him now. It only means that you would like to believe in Him, that you want to know Him, that you are going to try to follow Him.

And, once more, there are men who lose their faith, or who won't try to create a faith, not because they think themselves unworthy of the Church or of the Christian Association, but because they think these institutions are not good enough for them. They have a keen eye for the pious sinner, the canting hypocrite, and the youthful prig. They see a great many more of them in the world than actually exist; for these are all rare types. They jeer at the reactionaries and obscurantists in the ecclesiastical ranks; they see the inertia, and the conservatism of the Church — all the defects that are too apt to accompany an ancient institution. To be sure, the Church has survived the chances and changes of two thousand years; has seen the ancient empires around the Mediterranean wane and vanish; has persisted through all the climatic, social, political, and economic changes of the modern world. But they think that now her day is about done, and they prefer to stand outside and rail at her, rather than come inside and help her.

Well, it is true that she has plenty of defects. The laity are the only material for her clergy, and men like her critics are the only material for her laity. For long she conceived of herself as an ark of salvation to which the elect withdrew from a perishing and somewhat contemptible world. Sometimes she has lived off the community, rather than for it; and has been more concerned with the conserving of her prestige and the perpetuation of her organization than with the service of her day and generation. To the social and industrial strife of the moment she was not over-ready to apply the teaching of Jesus, nor, as she contemplated the comfortable, *bourgeois* aristocracy which filled her pews, was she too eager to socialize her ethics. Yet to-day, as in every day, she is doing the difficult, the patient, and the steadfast service in the community. She is bringing to the modern state what no other organization can bring — its spiritual dynamic, its vision of a purified and glorified humanity, made one with itself in God. Down through the centuries, for all her pride of place and lust for power, for all her follies and mistakes, the Church has been the chief factor in the civilizing of our western world.

Did you ever see a boy who was born of poor parents, ignorant, hard-working folk, who had

deformed their hands by toil, and turned their nights into day, to clothe him and feed him and warm him, and send him to school? And when he grew up, strong and able because of these advantages which they had lovingly and patiently gotten for him, they sent him to college and gave their love and their tears and their prayers, their time and effort and all their substance, for him and his advantage. They grew old and broken, and gray and bent, they were dull and uncouth and unlettered, not used to the polite and gracious ways of life, and yet they gave all they had to him, and lost their lives in his. And he went through the graduate school, and he became, let us say, a polished and a brilliant lawyer; he lived in a large world, in a dignified and formal and comfortable house, among well-mannered and sophisticated and highly intelligent people. And he forgot his old father and mother; he was rather ashamed of them, anyway, for their lapses of language were intolerable, their views of the world absurd, and they did n't know how to dress. They were 'way behind the times. And they could n't do very much for him now, and he did n't want to be identified with them. He wished they were well out of the way. Did you ever see such a boy? What would you think of him? Well, the Church is your mother,

my friends. She is the venerable and patient mother of us all. She has transmitted the hope of the race, the belief in the indefectible worth and honor of human nature, the vision of the good and gracious God. She saved, in her monasteries and churches, the remnants of the ancient learning in the awful wreck and break-up of great empires. She kept the torch of truth alight and made life tolerable and decent in the turbulent and decentralized days of feudalism. She sent her missionaries to our savage ancestors, who were offering their human sacrifices in the dark forests of Germany and Great Britain. She founded our schools and colleges, and created and organized our philanthropies, and herself sowed the seeds of democracy. Our country, our colleges, our homes, all the refuges of our lives we owe to her. Out from her capacious life have these things issued. And, in times of dreadful storms and stress, when body and mind and spirit have almost gone under and whole races of men have been in despair, she has gathered them to herself in sublime self-abnegation and in her bosom they have found shelter and peace. She is an ancient and venerable mother. She is worn with the strifes and the labors, the anguish, the effort, and the vision of many generations. She is slow to change, and

she is conservative in temper, and she does demand great things of us, and sometimes we have to have patience with our ancient mother. But when there are great moral issues on, and fights to be won, and sacrifices to be made, again she gathers up her ancient strength and lifts her gray head, and still she goes on ahead, and still men come after her. And what shall we do, my brothers, we, who are her children, we, whom she has nourished and brought into the world, we, who owe our all to what she has been and done? Shall we rail at her, laugh at her, desert her, be ashamed of her? Or shall we stand by her, as she has ever stood by our fathers and by us?

CHAPTER VI

RELIGION AND SCHOLARSHIP

We come, now, to the last of our discussions of the religious problem of the undergraduate. We have tried to make clear what the religious instinct is, and to describe and commend that particular explanation and expression of it known as Christianity. Particularly we have tried to show how Christianity is not a form of words or of ideas, but a form of power, a moral dynamic, which accompanies the experience of reconciliation with God and ourselves and men, brought about by faith in the person and teaching of Jesus. We have also looked at this Christian experience in the light of its history in the world, and at the difficulties which have beset it, and we have reviewed the chief causes which have seemed to make it impossible for many good and able men to accept its teaching.

Now, neither of these previous chapters will have fulfilled their purpose unless they have made you see how natural and how universal a phenomenon religion is; how normal and beneficent are its operations, and how precious its rewards, as it enlarges the horizons of life, and

imparts, to the most insignificant activities of daily living, abiding values and continuous inspiration. Starting, then, from this assertion of the indispensableness of religion, its natural and central place in a normal and completed life, we take up the theme of this chapter, and inquire, If religion be thus important, just what place should it hold in the student's life; what is the relation between learning and the cultivation of the spirit?

As we try to answer that question, we may say, first, and in general, that men have always perceived that there is a natural and intimate connection between the discipline of the mind and the cultivation of the spirit. Churches and schools stand close together in the history of western Europe and of our own nation, and have, indeed, for the most part, been inseparable. Few things are more striking among contemporary tendencies in America than the growing sense in this Republic that religion and learning, education and piety, cannot be permanently and successfully kept apart.

Our public school system is built upon the principle of the separation of Church and State. It has appeared to be a corollary of that principle that no sort of religious instruction should be given under state or federal auspices. We

have to-day, all through the Middle West, the truly amazing sight of a system of education which, from the kindergarten to the graduate school, cultivates everything in the individual except his spirit, and, to a large extent, ignores that portion of the personality where ideals are formed, convictions originate, and motives take their rise. But here in the East, where our secular school system has been tried out longer, it is significant to see how the sense of the community is endeavoring, by means of private enterprise, to supplement its spiritual impoverishment. On the one hand, we have the parochial schools of the Roman Catholic communion, maintained by taxpayers who are already supporting the public school system, for the express purpose of insuring that religion and scholarship shall not be dissociated for their children. On the other hand, we have, in Protestant communities, the rapid increase in the expensive private fitting school, one of whose chief reasons for commending itself to the public is that it offers religious instruction and church privileges, together with secular learning; and this school also is supported by those who are already paying for the public instruction of their children by the State. One sometimes wonders what is to be the future of the public school in these Eastern

States, with the best elements of both the Catholic and the Protestant communities steadily being withdrawn from it. Under such circumstances, it cannot continue to be the nursery of American democracy that it once was. Certainly, this withdrawal indicates, among other things, the conviction on the part of mature men and women that the education of the spirit is at least as valuable as the training of the body and the mind. It indicates that we are beginning to see that the best which a purely secular education can do for a youth is to acquaint him with the uniform workings of the world, the laws of nature and life, and that it is quite as necessary, both for himself and for society, that his will should be disciplined as well, to conform itself to the laws which the mind perceives. It is not, then, without significance that the three commanding physical expressions of school and university life in the Eastern States are the chapel, the library, and the gymnasium. For all three of these supplement each other, and naturally belong together in the making of a man.

And yet, some of us always, and all of us sometimes, feel a little distrust of too close an alliance between piety and scholarship, and that distrust is, probably, most active at the undergraduate's time of life. There are three groups

of men in college, two of them approaching the question from the point of view of the religionist, and one of them from the point of view of the scholar, who agree in opposing and disliking a close mutual dependence between scholarship and religion.

The first of these groups is probably the largest in the college. It consists of those men in whom the religious experience, by reason of previous environment or inheritance, has naturally expressed itself in traditional forms and conventional convictions. The devotional and practical uses of Scripture have been exalted in their minds. The historic postulates and creeds of Christianity have been regarded as sufficient and obligatory upon the present believer. But when the youth comes up to the college of liberal arts, he is plunged at once into an impartial, exacting, austerely intellectual atmosphere. He finds the air of the classroom cool and cautious and neutral, and its spirit sufficiently sterile and frigid. If he enters any one of half a dozen courses in the departments of natural science, history, psychology, or philosophy, there critical research, comparative study, a new historical method, a modern view of the world, all appear maliciously to combine to pull his house of faith about his ears. Symbols

and doctrines, precious from earliest childhood, and identified by him with his moral victories and his spiritual achievements, are ruthlessly swept aside. The external habits of piety, to which he has been accustomed in his guides and teachers, may be largely absent from his instructors in the classroom. These men seem to him to live in another world, which recognizes few of the values of his world, which, if it prizes at all the inner life, finds far from obvious channels for its expression. How lonely, indeed, how terrified and bewildered, many an unsophisticated and sensitive lad has been, as he has faced the specters of his mind during the rapid development of his college years. We do not wonder if he reacts against the learning which appears to be the enemy of the spirit. We do not condemn him if he rails against what seems to him to be a complacent intellectualism, or if he adopts the old vicious antithesis between spirituality and science, the scholar and the seer. Rather, we who teach wonder whether by carelessness or indifference we have obscured what we should illumine. I suppose the most important qualification for a teacher of immature minds is the having of a just scale of values, the knowing how to keep first things first when talking and teaching in the classroom. Sometimes the teacher

obscures the truth with technical language, or by abstract and pedantic presentation. Sometimes we are too worldly-wise, or so provincial in our own view of life that, as we teach the truth, we fail to convey with it the spiritual glory which is its natural accompaniment and attestation in any department of human knowledge. Perhaps we too far divorce our science or our philosophy from those human origins and those specific applications which chiefly commend and interpret it to immature minds. But, however far we may have failed in our teaching, we never for a moment doubt, nor must we let youth doubt, that the severest scholarship, the purest learning, are indispensable to true religion, and they are never incompatible with it. We hear a good deal, nowadays, about the abuse of special privilege, and we are seeing the determined efforts being made by state and federal governments to wipe out special privilege, as it is found in the commercial, the political, and the industrial world. But one of the greatest sinners in the use of special privileges has been the Christian Church. For long she claimed that the canons of judgment which men were allowed to exercise in every other department of their lives must not be brought to bear upon her; that her dicta were to be accepted, not questioned; and

that if what she declared to be true appeared to be disproved by the known truth in some other department of human life and effort, still her commands and decisions were to be accepted and obeyed. Men have even gone so far as to feel and to assert that where religious conviction and pure knowledge appeared to clash, why then so much the worse for pure knowledge! And, even as we are learning how dangerous a thing it is for the State and for commerce and industry and the social well-being of the community to permit special privileges to flourish in the nation, so we have also learned that it is equally dangerous for the cause of true religion. To favor scientific research everywhere else, but to discourage it in the realm of man's permanent interests, where his origin and his destiny are concerned, would be only less fatal for religion than for him who believes in it. No one, indeed, will ever understand the reality and the power of the spiritual life unless he values religion too highly and believes in it too profoundly ever for a moment to adopt the point of view of a pietistic obscurantism. Religion is too inclusive and too infinitely precious to the race ever to be given over to the mere custody of the instinct and the emotions. To be unwilling to submit our spiritual convictions and religious faiths to the most

searching inquiry and criticism is to confess that in our heart of hearts we are afraid of the results of that experiment, and are, like John Henry Newman, unconscious and fundamental skeptics. The very cornerstone of a true religious belief is the assertion that truth and God cannot be found apart, and that there is nothing real in one department of the universe which can ever alter or diminish the realities of another.

Indeed, a sincere and candid scholarship is not only morally obligatory upon the believer, but it is the most able champion of a free and rational piety. This is well illustrated in the case of the authority of the Christian Scriptures. The Church has always believed in the inspiration of the Bible, and has made it a rule of faith and practice for her children. Most of us were brought up under one or another of several theories of that inspiration which were formulated during the Protestant Reformation, and which, in their most extreme and mechanical expressions, issued from the Swiss reformer, Zwingli, and his followers. These theories set forth, in general, that the entire content of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures was given by the dictation of God; that they are of a flat and equal inspiration from cover to cover, and may be said to have possessed originally a verbal

inerrancy. Now, no man can go through college to-day and be taught any just historical method, any just canons of literary criticism, or any adequate theistic philosophy, and maintain that view. We soon learn, therefore, that our teachers do not regard the Bible as inerrant; they do not believe it has a flat and equal inspiration from cover to cover; and they would not for a moment dream of accepting it as an authoritative guide either in natural science or in history.

What, then, shall the devout student do? Shall he condemn as impious the learning which shatters his traditional convictions and refuse to apply that learning to his religious life? Shall he keep in a closed compartment, so to speak, that portion of his experience? If he does so, he commits a moral and intellectual misdemeanor which is as foolish as it is indefensible. Shall he, on the other hand, rashly throw away his whole belief in the authority of Scripture, and, without further investigation or any clear grounds for his action, adopt a superficial and unintelligent skepticism? Again, he will be guilty of both moral and intellectual wrongdoing. But what he ought to do is to say, "I am a beginning scholar, and revere myself as such. I am here to get at the truth, and the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Both the opportu-

nity and the obligation are mine to discover why my learning and my faith appear to be hopelessly divergent in this important matter." And then, by virtue of his very scholarship, if only, on the one hand, he will not despise it, and on the other hand, will be thorough in the use of it, he will find that the new learning does not destroy his faith, but, on the contrary, greatly reinforces it, and gives to it a new foundation. For he will discover that what modern scholarship does is not to deny the inspiration of Scripture, but to restate the theory of that inspiration; and to rest the proof of it on internal, not external, witness, and to account for it by natural and logical, not supernatural and arbitrary, processes. Those who know the Bible best to-day, who have the most intelligent and accurate understanding of it, who can distinguish in its compilations, its various authors and editors, and can re-date its manuscripts, are precisely those who most believe in it. It is they who have given us the new theory of inspiration, and the tenable theory. The scholar is the champion, not the destroyer, of the faith, for he says: "I know that the Bible is inspired, not because God dictated it, not because miracles or predictions are found in it, not because it is, or ever has been, inerrant; but because it

inspires me." Being an inspiring book, of course it is inspired. As Coleridge said, "I believe in the Bible, because it finds me at greater depths and heights than any other book."

It is precisely the scholar, who can to-day best assert the authority of the Scripture. He declares that its ethical and spiritual teachings are true, and rests the proof of that assertion, not on the dictum of a church or a council, not on the authority of a great tradition, but back upon human nature itself. For the Bible has commended itself as true to the experience of successive generations of men, down through the ages. All sorts and kinds of men, under all sorts of social, economic, intellectual conditions, have found truth in it. Therefore, by the witness of the experience of the race, it is known to be true. It does not claim for itself, and for the most part the Church has never claimed for it, that it contains inspired historical and scientific material. But it does claim for itself, and the experience of the world has amply supported that claim, that it reveals the life of God and the heart of a man, each to the other, as does no other literature of the world.

Modern scholarship, then, has here, as in a hundred other places, done infinite service to religion by its restatement of the nature of the

inspiration and the extent of the authority of Holy Scripture. Such attacks upon the Bible, for instance, as were widely and brilliantly made by the late Colonel Ingersoll would have been futile if scholarship had been allowed to come to the defense of Scripture in his day. For his criticism of the Bible was based chiefly upon a theory of its origin and a conception of its nature which scholarship has shown to be quite beside the point. The Christian scholar, to-day, regards the Bible as the imperfect record of an ascending spiritual evolution; the vivid history of the growing experience of God in the race of Israel; the race which above all others was richly endowed with religious genius. This spiritual evolution reaches its culmination in the great prophets Amos and Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah, and finally comes to a perfect fruition in the teaching and person of the Lord Jesus, by whom all that comes before and after Him, in the record, is to be judged. And we believe and accept this incomparable teaching, not because it comes down to us with the authority of the past, but because it searches and finds, illumines and empowers, the present. We do not believe a thing is true because it is in the Bible. We are on far safer ground than that; we believe in the Bible because we know it to be true.

Here, then, is a very familiar instance of the value of the new science of history, of the new methods of literary criticism and of the new view of the world, as allies of sincere and intelligent religion. Here, as elsewhere, learning has not been the foe of the spirit, but has given to our faith a new expression, a new interpretation, and a new apologetic.

But there is another group of men in the college who depreciate the patient and indirect processes of scholarship, and think them not too necessary for the religious life. There are to be found, in the modern college, many young men who are chiefly conspicuous for their ethical idealism. Their interests are not abstract, but concrete; not academic, but practical. And they themselves have devout rather than alert minds. These men are lovable and humane spirits. They are keenly aware of the sorrow and the sin and the injustice of this present world, and anxious to devote their lives to remedial and preventive service. Through their various businesses or professions, they mean, when college days are over, to aid their world rather than to exploit it. These are the men who have made the term "social service" one of the watchwords of the twentieth-century college. But very few of these men appear to

reflect that the value of social service is largely determined by the maturity and efficiency of the servant; and that all any one has to serve with is himself. On the contrary, they are more attracted by the ardent and generous ideal of immediate benefactions than by scrupulous and severe preparation for a more significant and difficult service in the future. These men are among the most lovable and the most exasperating of the types to be found in the present college. They have less intellectual than moral integrity. They can scarcely be said to value adequately specific intellectual convictions or a thorough scholastic equipment. On the contrary, they appear to think that the noblest idea of the college course is that it exists for a general culture, to be infused with moral and religious earnestness, for social ends. Hence, they have far more conscience about conduct than they have about scholarship. They realize the moral obligation to be good. They do not realize the moral obligation to be intelligent. These men look askance at nearly all advanced or very technical training, and are loath to recognize the value of such studies as bear only indirectly upon the practical issues of life. Why read the Greek and Latin classics, when our fellow citizens wait to be taught the rudiments of the English tongue?

Why be occupied with experiments in natural science, why study psychology and metaphysics, and be put through the drill of higher mathematics, when there are mouths to feed, and feet to be shod, and bodies to be warmed, and tears to be wiped away? The chief thing is not the ornament of learning, but the man. Yes, of course, that 's true. But this group sums up the man almost wholly in terms of moral vigor, personal attractiveness, and social helpfulness. It underrates the gray matter. One must confess there is something a little wearying and disappointing in the almost undivided allegiance which youth gives to the immediate, the obvious, and the practical.

But, of course, the men who belong to this group are restless during their four college years. They feel the narrowing isolation of the academic walls. Sometimes religious and philanthropic associations exploit this intellectual distaste of ethically ideal youth, and are not unwilling prematurely to exhaust their precious human material. So these half-prepared scholars, these near-students, are called away from the library and the student lamp, to secretarial, administrative, even teaching, positions. There are many promising and popular young men who are unable to perceive that the chief cause of

their favored standing in the community, and their only real asset now, is the mere accident of their youth. Hence, they underrate the severe intellectual preparation which develops those less picturesque but more solid powers, which will deepen and abide after the fervor and the fever of youth have passed away. A few years ago, Dr. Francis Greenwood Peabody, most justly pointed out that it is the great mistake of American life that "feeling and action are crowding out of the foreground of interest the function of thought; piety and efficiency are being made substitutes for intellectual power." Now the passion for service is a poor passion if it supplants the passion for truth. No man is competent to lead his generation in any ideal way till he has matured and disciplined his mind as well as his spirit. Premature engagement in the activities of life, to the deliberate neglect of the intellectual equipment for those activities, means that the student is bankrupting his future, and, all unconsciously, exploiting his own youth.

And I am most concerned to say a word to any man reading these pages, who may be looking forward to some professional form of ethical or spiritual leadership in his generation, You of all men should revere learning, and aim at scholarship. It will be well for the

future of organized religion in this country if every young man, who is looking forward to associating himself with it, could be made to understand that a general culture, religious earnestness, ability to talk attractively and effectively on the common duties of life, are quite insufficient in themselves for that type of ethical and spiritual leadership which this generation is demanding. Do not let yourselves forget that in every age men have demanded far more than ethical counsel and practical helpfulness from their spiritual advisers. They have insisted that these men should direct them in their search for light on the great speculative questions regarding the origin and the destiny of the race and the nature of the human heart. The weakness of the Christian Church to-day is not in the quantity but the quality of her leaders. There are enough of them, such as they are. It is not so much enthusiastic as expert service that we need.

And this is almost equally true in every other department of human effort. In the old days of picturesque warfare, the general was the man who in brilliant uniform and with flashing sword, astride his foaming charger, waved high the standard, and cried, —

"On, ye Brave
Who rush to glory, or the grave!"

Then he galloped ahead, followed by a wildly cheering multitude. Such a man would be a confounded nuisance and an arrant failure in any strife of modern times. To-day we want the general who knows, not does; who knows military tactics and strategy; who knows his men, and the enemy, and the intimate topography of the field; and who on his distant hill has a clear, whole view of it, so that, with the unerring precision of the expert, he moves his armies like pawns upon a chessboard hither and yon. I trust you see the meaning of the illustration. The more generous your ideals of life, the more unselfish your aims, the more religious your spirit, the more eager you should be for the indispensable ally of a developed and disciplined intellect, which shall give steadiness and intelligence to your enthusiasm, wisdom and inclusiveness to your endeavors.

But there is a third group of men to be found in the college, who regard the alliance between piety and learning from precisely the opposite point of view. They have a sort of intellectual contempt for religion. It belongs to women and children and ministers, to romantic and sentimental people, to emotional and illogical beings. It was of great value to the childhood of the race, and is of value now to the individual, in his

childish days, but surely a negligible factor for the college man. Sometimes its chief value to this group of men is that it offers so much material for flippant comment and inexpensive wit. It was long ago noted that the sublime lies very near to the ridiculous; and there are always men who are not unwilling to take advantage of that fact, and who would sacrifice a conviction for an epigram, an ideal for a bon mot. So the men in this group are not at all concerned lest insufficient devotion be mingled with their learning. They are rather of the opinion that their scholarship will be more single-minded, more veritable and effective, if it is quite divorced from either the public or the private exercises of piety during their four undergraduate years.

It must be said that one is often struck with the nobility of the motives which may lie behind this apparently hard and contemptuous attitude. One of those motives is a fine passion for the truth, and the determination to make the most of the opportunity to find it. A man has made sacrifices, both personal and material, in order to gain his four years' academic residence. He has now that most rare and precious thing in the American world — leisure for intellectual pursuits. He is having what is probably his only chance to drink deep at the fount of learning.

Surely, then, the library, the study, the laboratory, and the seminar room may be exalted high above the chapel. He will always have the Church; he cannot always have the college. Again, it is often the passion for intellectual integrity and ethical sincerity which lies behind this deliberate and contemptuous neglect of the spiritual life. In the churches or schools from which the youth has come, intellectual freedom and moral independence have not always been associated with organized religion. In college, therefore, fired by that passion for reality and honesty, which is one of the noblest things in the young life, he reacts from all the external observances and pious practices which serve to remind him of abandoned intellectual expediencies, and seem to bring him back into the atmosphere of timid obscurantism.

And then there is another factor, too. We have all of us seen youth in college who were so good that there was something positively indecent about them. Theirs was an unnatural virtue. They were too good to be true. Or we have seen youth of the sort whom Phillips Brooks remembered, from his days at Alexandria; lads who could exhort and pray with one another, at the college prayer meeting, until their very natures seemed on fire, but who, assembled in

the classroom on the next morning, were found to be dullards and sluggards when viewed in the garish light of common day. Their devotion and their duty were divorced. Their religion was neither a sanction nor a standard for their daily work. Such men always arouse, in their more normal fellows, a healthy and a merited contempt and often induce in them distaste for all religious forms and observances. And then behind it all there is, I dare say, a temperamental reason. The scholar is by nature cool, cautious, critical. The devotee is by nature warm, eager, imaginative. Those personal qualities, therefore, which induce dependence upon and delight in personal religion and public worship are the reverse of the ones which lead men to the lonely and concentrated and colorless efforts of the mind.

It is quite to be expected, then, in these four years, when scholastic interests are naturally to the front, that, in many of the really brilliant youth of the college, delight in and dependence upon the cultivation of the spirit should tend to diminish. But it is to just this type of youth, the men of intellectual ambitions and mental powers, the men who are conscious of a growing and a capacious intelligence, that I should like to address the final paragraphs of this chapter. It is precisely those men who are chiefly interested

in scientific and intellectual pursuits who are the last men in the world who can afford to neglect the assiduous cultivation of the spiritual life. For pure learning sometimes degenerates into pedantry. The scholar is always in danger of becoming the scholastic. Much learning often dehumanizes men. They sink to a narrow intensity of vision within their own department. Their specialty is just before their eyes, its little province obscuring the great kingdoms of the world. With the measuring-rod of their detached learning they mistakenly gauge the universe; their's is a text-book philosophy. They become provincials, left behind in some side eddy by the great stream of human life, unable any longer to enter into and sympathize with its normal and essential experiences. All the bitter flings at scholarship, in which every age has delighted, all the semi-contemptuous references to the teacher and the professor, which practical men of every time have made, are partly due to this fact, that scholarship has too often carried the scholar out of that area of vital and elemental experience, where most men live their lives, and where the indispensable things of life are to be found.

The scholar, then, of all men in the world, needs concrete interests. He needs, for his own

even development, for sweetness and sanity of personality, to keep in close touch with the warm, throbbing heart of human life. In no way can he do this so certainly as by maintaining his religious passion and cultivating his spiritual experience. It is the office of religion to enlarge the humanity of its votaries. Men never get so close to one another as when they pray together. They never so truly understand one other as when they worship side by side the God who hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth and who is no respecter of persons. There is no fellowship the world has knowledge of so potent and so intimate as that which knits together the elect in one communion and fellowship in the life of the Eternal Spirit. How many men might have their influence and their happiness increased a hundred fold were their humanity equal to their learning, and able thus always to vitalize it and make it effective! But no man who maintains a sincere and simple faith needs to fear the desiccating results of long-continued and laborious research. For the true religionist is a supreme humanist.

Finally, I would remind you, who deprecate the alliance between learning and religion, that the last half of the nineteenth century made it

terribly clear that the learning and science of mankind, where they are divorced from piety, unconsecrated by a spiritual passion, and largely directed by selfish motives, can neither benefit nor redeem the race. Consider for a moment the enormous expansion of knowledge which the world has witnessed since the year 1859. What prodigious accessions to the sum of our common understanding have we seen in the natural and the humane sciences; and what marvelous uses of scientific knowledge for practical purposes have we discovered! We have mastered in these latter days a thousand secrets of nature. We have freed the mind from old ignorance and ancient superstition. We have penetrated the secrets of the body, and can almost conquer death and indefinitely prolong the span of human days. We face the facts and know the world as our fathers could never do. We understand the past and foresee the future. But the most significant thing about our present situation is this: how little has this wisdom, in and of itself, done for us! It has made men more cunning, rather than more noble. Still the body is ravaged and consumed by passion. Still men toil for others against their will, and "The strong spill the blood of the weak for their ambition, and the sweat of the children for their greed." Never

was learning so diffused, nor the content of scholarship so large as now. Yet the great cities are as Babylon and Rome of old, where human wreckage multiplies, and hideous vices flourish, and men toil without expectancy, and live without hope, and millions exist from hand to mouth. As we survey the universal unrest of the world to-day, and see the horrors of war between nation and nation and between class and class, it would not be difficult to make out a case for the thesis that the scientific and intellectual advances of the nineteenth century have largely worked to make men keener and more capacious in their suffering. And, at least this is true; in just so far as the achievement of the mind has been divorced from the consecration of the spirit, in just so far knowledge has had no beneficent potency for the human race.

The twentieth century needs, in order to make life tolerable, just what the first century needed — the sacrifice of love, the devotion of the spirit, the humbling of the soul before its God. Intellectual training enriches and illumines human lives when accompanied by the light and peace of a veritable moral victory. But without that victory, it can make men into devils. Scholarship is precious and sublime when it is directed to precious and ideal ends. Learning is not

of much use if the learning is greater than the man who thinks that he possesses it. We ought to be thankful that in our American colleges, across the campus from the library, stands the college church; and that under its roof, morning by morning and Sunday by Sunday, we have to assemble for meditation and quiet and communion. For it is by just such natural and venerable practices of the spirit, by such corporate confessions of the inner life, that the consecration of personality keeps pace with the enlargement of mentality, and the man grows with his learning.

CHAPTER VII

IS LEARNING ESSENTIAL?

In the "Hibbert Journal" of October, 1913, there was a delightful article by Professor Erskine, of Columbia University, on the provocative theme: "The Moral Obligation to be Intelligent." In this article he pointed out that the disposition to consider intelligence a positive peril, and to make an antithesis between brains and virtue, is an ancient custom of our English race. He reminds us that, in our literature, most men of brains have been conceived of as villians, as, for instance, Iago and Macbeth in Shakespeare and Satan in Milton's "Paradise Lost"; and that most men of honor, while they may have been thought of as knowing good and evil, have been apparently quite unable to tell them apart. And he quotes Kingsley's delightfully Victorian line:

"Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever."

It is, then, part of our inheritance that we should suspect brains, and even think that a really virile male is obligated to depreciate brilliancy. The Anglo-Saxon temperament has always exalted doing, at the expense of knowing. Half unconsciously we expect that neither first-

rate manhood nor large efficiency may be looked for from scholarship. This prejudice was very clearly revealed in the semi-contemptuous, semi-patronizing references to the "doctor" and the "professor," when our present Chief Executive was first nominated for the Presidency.*

We ought not, then, to be over-surprised or too harshly critical if we find the undergraduate incapable, both by inheritance and environment, of justly appreciating intellectual discipline. And amazing though it sounds, and is, there are, as a matter of fact, few places in the Anglo-Saxon world where this naïve dislike of learning, this provincial distrust of intelligence, more clearly displays itself than in the American college.

It is one of the many humorous elements in our undergraduate life that the question which forms the theme of this chapter, "Is Learning Essential?" can be asked in all good faith, and may be quite seriously debated. It is certain that many of the students in our colleges quite frankly and innocently regard scholarship as purely incidental to an undergraduate career. When we remember that our New England institutions were founded to produce scholars in general and a learned ministry in particular;

*Dr. Thomas Woodrow Wilson.

that, indeed, a lad is still supposed to go to school primarily to get schooling, it really gives us pause to contemplate the low average of intelligence and the limited intellectual power of the typical undergraduate. This may seem to be a harsh indictment; but the trouble is not that it is harsh, but that it is true. A scholar is a disciple of learning; one who has begun to love knowledge for its own gracious and liberating sake, and who has acquired enough of it in his four academic years to begin to be a cultivated man. But am I wrong in saying that there are not many undergraduates who answer to that definition? There are certainly some men in every college class who already love learning for its own sake, and their number is steadily increasing. It might be well for the boy who will not seriously work his mind in college, and who feels that he ought not to be expected or compelled to do so, to realize, now, that his days are numbered. As I look back over the fourteen years which have elapsed since my own graduating from Harvard, the two changes most noticeable in the college during that time are the growth of a new corporate consciousness in undergraduate life, and the increasing intellectual seriousness, coincident with the stiffening of the college course. Formerly, if a man attended

his lectures with decent regularity, and did some hard work in the weeks preceding his midyear and final examinations, he might spend the better part of his year in elegant leisure, and still make his degree, even make it with distinction. But now, by means of the frequent conferences and quizzes set in the elementary courses, and the large number of theses required in more advanced work, this is no longer true. The minimum of intellectual labor which a student must perform to maintain his undergraduate standing is much larger than it used to be, and it is steadily increasing.

There are, then, not a few men who have deliberately left philistinism, and are beginning to live in the realms of sweetness and light; but most undergraduates don't know what "philistinism" means! And, from the point of view of genuine scholarship, the student body separates into two groups. In the first group, which does not, I think, comprise half the college, are men who do considerable serious intellectual work, but who do it from such mistaken motives, or for such inadequate ends, that they cannot be dignified by the gentle name of "scholar." These men are either "grinds" or "commercialists." By "grinds" I mean men who value information rather than the human insights, the

ideal values, the enlarged view of truth, which may be gained through information, or who value it because of the academic standing, the personal position which it gives to them. They make no distinction between knowledge and wisdom, and would consider an immature erudition a sufficient substitute for developed personality. They become a sort of walking encyclopædia, an irritating and unhuman compendium of ill-assorted and unrelated information. They are not springs, but sponges; the depositories, rather than the sources, of ideas. They are full of other people's thoughts, but they are hardly thinkers. They cultivate no wide human contacts and have no clear and intelligent idea of life as a whole, neither perceiving the end which they should have in view nor the just means whereby to reach it. The grind has certain admirable qualities, intellectual conscience, mental energy, perseverance, and ambition of a sort. But, for all that, the grind is not a scholar.

The other men in this first group are the commercialists. They are possessed of a sound "business sense" — oh, glorious and glorified phrase! — which means, in simple and sincere English, the sense of the value of money. They have been sent to college because they and their parents think that, on the whole, it offers them

a good business preparation, which means that it will instruct them in the gentle art of making money. Hence these men work very well in certain undergraduate departments, not because they are interested in intellectual ideals, but because, to put it very crudely, they feel sure that it pays. They would choose, during their four years, therefore, those courses whose immediate utility they can perceive. They want the sort of learning which may be readily cashed. Hence, all disciplines of indirect value are deprecated. The so-called cultural courses are not popular. The classics and literature seem futile. Now, these men, too, have certain admirable qualities; energy, ambition, and self-reliance, and, while they are essentially alien figures in the college of liberal arts, they are much more sinned against than sinning. For they are the direct products of our American life, with its practical ingenuity, its mechanical interests, its opulent materialism. Like the grinds, however, these men, though often good students, are not scholars. For they do not love learning for its own sake, nor perceive the large and natural ends which it serves. They have not seen the vision which learning and religion alike induce, that the real values of life are intangible and invisible, that the precious

ends of human effort are spiritual. They have neither this gracious spirit nor this philosophic sense. Having means more to them than being.

Thus we dispose of our first group, and approach the second, and immediately we yet further descend. For some of the men in this second group are merely "sports." Probably you know what the "sport" is. He is the elegant mendicant, the academic beggar, the hanger-on to the fringes of undergraduate life. He corresponds, in our world, to that well-known figure in rural districts, whose chief function in life is to lounge about the railway station, meditatively turning a wisp of hay between his teeth, watching the trains go by. He is apt to wear somewhat exaggerated clothes and to have a somewhat exaggerated manner. He represents inconsequent irresponsibility, raised to the *n*th power. President Jordan compares him to that other group of men found in metropolitan centers who chiefly support the city's lamp-posts while their women work at the washtub or run the sewing-machine. He points out that, like them, the sport has no sense of responsibility to his community and no large self-respect, but looks upon time, the one incalculably precious possession of the human being, as something to be got rid of;

and means to dispose of it without giving any return for it.

Now, not all of us are sports. For, while all of us are lazy, laziness being an almost invariable accompaniment of rapidly growing youth, most of us have genuine and respectable interests, upon which we expend a great deal of thought, will, and energy. The difficulty with most boys is not in getting them to work at what they like, but in persuading them to like that at which they ought to work. And the trouble is that most of us do not expend our time and selves, in the four incomparable years, upon the things for which those years are intended and from which we should derive our largest advantage. Our chief interests are physical; the intellectual feebleness of the college is clearest shown in the grotesque exaggeration of athletic interests. This is both a cause and effect of the low average of undergraduate intelligence, but chiefly, I think, a cause. I am aware that, like King Agag before Samuel, I must walk delicately, if I am to approach the subject of athletics when writing for undergraduates. But it is impossible to ignore it, for the amount of time and effort which athletics absorb in the modern college is out of all proportion to the benefits which are gained from them. And, it is nothing short of

degenerative to have a man win first-rate standing in the academic community on grounds and achievements other than those for which such a community primarily stands. It has almost come to the pass, to-day, that the method of judging our instructors, or any older person's mental or spiritual ability, is to find out what impression they may have made upon the young Hercules of the college, or whether, in their own youth, they were able to do the high jump or to put the shot. At a leading university of the Middle West, last winter, I heard an announcement given by one of the deans of the institution to the undergraduate audience which a few moments afterward I was to address. The dean was announcing that a young and able missionary leader was to speak at the university during Holy Week, and he desired to commend him to a large and favorable hearing. What was his method of presenting him to the audience? He informed them that at a recent series of meetings, held by the speaker in question in an Eastern college, every member of the football team had been won over! Well, what more could one ask? What better method is there to use, in a great university, when commending a teacher and a scholar, than to say that the members of the Eleven have assured his success, by graciously

signifying, concerning him, their sovereign approval? Again, the general absorption in athletics is detrimental to the genuine intellectual interests of the college, not so much through the athletes themselves, for they do get a vigorous discipline in things moral and physical, but through the mass of undergraduate onlookers, who take out their athletics chiefly by sitting on the bleachers during the contest and by wasting time discussing the game afterward. All young men appear to be natural gossips, and to enjoy inconsequent small talk and the bandying about of every sort of undergraduate rumor. But the amount of time that groups of men will spend going over and over, with wearisome iteration, every detail of recent athletic contests, would really be incredible to any one who had not observed it for himself. Quite recently I traveled by chance for some four hours in a Pullman car with a group of young men, most of whom I knew, who were returning on the day before graduation to their own college from another institution, where they had either been spectators or participants in a baseball game. They spent the entire afternoon, while on the train, in no other occupation except that of calculating batting averages and rehearsing the separate plays of their classmates of the day before. Not much can be said in defense

of this vicarious athletic activity. Certainly, it should always come second in a normal undergraduate career, as a part of the relaxation from real intellectual pursuits. But, as a matter of fact, it often comes first, and studies must get what they can of the time and energy which are left. Hence so many men crowd into the easier courses; hence it is fashionable to depreciate learning, and not good form to be a cultivated person. There is, of course, a very vivid and spectacular side to these athletic interests, and it is not hard to understand why they dominate undergraduate imagination. There is, for instance, a new figure who has appeared in the college world since my day, — the cheer leader; and even as the rabbit is charmed by the eye of the snake, so do we older men regard him, fascinated, and with awe. He is a delirious person, curveting and capering up and down the side lines like any faun, his nimble feet spurning the ground. With sublime self-abnegation he turns his back upon the heroes of the gridiron. Wrath and zeal are shining in his eyes, exhorting passion quivers on his lips, while his wildly waving arms implore, demand, create the vocal thunders that sweep along the serried ranks of the bleachers, from the throats of his admiring peers! Who would not go to any college, and submit to

almost any intellectual discipline, if he might attain to such a power? What is a Phi Beta Kappa Key beside it? But when the tumult and the shouting die, the solemn pity of it all remains, that many a youth comes of age and is graduated from college with a man's body and a boy's mind.

Hence it is true that most of us are frankly illiterate, and we are graduated illiterate. I don't mean by that that we are unable to read or write, or to express ourselves after a rough-and-ready fashion. I mean that most of us, as scholars, are arrant failures, because we are ignorant of good literature, and incapable of conveying our thoughts with elegance or lucidity or precision. A letter from an undergraduate in a leading Eastern university, written last winter, illustrates the point. He was writing home on a Sunday afternoon, and referring to the sermon preached that morning before the university, by perhaps the most distinguished public speaker now residing in New York City. The boy's appreciation of this really notable man was a masterpiece of discriminating insight and felicitous expression. He wrote: "We had a guy down here this morning from New York, who preached forty minutes. Gee, he was rotten!" Now, this is the language one might expect from the East-Side gamin. It represents

gross illiteracy in an undergraduate. Much of the profanity which is very common among students, many, also, of the more extreme forms of slang which enliven their conversations, may be traced to the same cause. They are not due so much to viciousness or native vulgarity as to undeveloped intelligence. The student is unable to express himself clearly and simply, and therefore falls back on ancient expletives and vivid emotional symbols. The chief impression which a conversation with a typical undergraduate leaves on the listener is of the inchoate condition of the boy's mind. This inability to express himself is, in a great measure, due to his ignorance of English, to say nothing of European, letters. Dean West has pointed out that the majority of college students are not familiar with the commonplaces of literary information; with the standard books of history, fiction, and verse. How much do they even know of that greatest of all books in our English tongue, which records the high-water mark of our spoken language — the King James Version of the Bible? I once asked a boy in my Freshman Bible class, "Who was Hagar?" and he gently replied, "One of the twelve Apostles." And so that incomparable record of human experience, and masterpiece of sober, yet warm and vivid English, together with

all the treasure of thought and emotion which our larger literature comprehends, all, is essentially unknown.

This is surely one reason why there appears to be an increasing impoverishment of personality in the undergraduate body. Individualities are not developed; there are fewer notable and outstanding figures. I think it is chiefly due to the illiteracy. Some of us do, indeed, acquire considerable information in college, but not the grace and sensitiveness, the breadth and insight which should issue from it. No man can be called a scholar, or be said to have succeeded as an undergraduate, or to have utilized his most precious opportunities, who has failed to gain something of that spiritual breeding, that quick and varied appreciation, that adaptability to men and surroundings, that sane and tolerant knowledge of human life which only wide acquaintance with letters can bring to youth. But we read, instead of literature, the sporting page of the newspaper, the ten-cent magazines, the current and ephemeral fiction. Do we expect that learning and culture are to be found between the pages of the short story in "Munsey's" and "McClure's"? Are we supposed, in college, to study the humanities and read the classics, to acquaint ourselves with books on

philosophy and science, only to that limited extent which will enable us to gain pass-marks in a certain number of courses, and to issue respectably from our *Alma Mater?* When one considers the variety of intellectual interests thrust upon us all to-day, the paucity and poverty of intellectual life in college, the intellectual frugality of undergraduate conversation, is appalling. There is little intelligent discussion of significant contemporary themes, whether in politics or economics or ethics. The undergraduates of to-day know some facts, but they have few ideas. They can talk quite glibly on things, but are confused in the realm of principles, and are notably unable to trace effects to their just causes. The childish and bizarre motives which the average undergraduate will assign to his parents, his minister, his president and his faculty, for their deeds, betray an utter absence in him of just observation or the power to make rational deductions.

This, then, is what I mean by illiteracy. And it is not only a severe but it is a humiliating indictment to bring against the modern collegian. And yet, is the picture which it presents so very different from the actual undergraduate life as you yourselves live it? What is the goal of your college days? Is n't it to be active and cheerful

and energetic, and to have a good time? Is n't it to avoid any long-continued intellectual responsibility, and not to think too seriously (lest you be a highbrow!), and say you are never young but once, and enjoy yourself? Is n't it to gain in college a smattering of knowledge upon a number of secondary subjects, to dip into the clever and popular publications of the moment, to use, with complacent facility, the particular patter of your group or class? Is n't it to wear, with scrupulous exactness, the precise garment which fashion demands and which your tailors will trust you with, to cheer with superb noise at the games, and to be adept in sitting on bleachers? Is n't it, in vacation time, to see the actor and hear the singer of the moment, and to know the names, or yet better the persons, of famous — or infamous — people? That is an exaggerated picture, but it is just true enough to be justifiable. It is this absence of intellectual vigor, this commonplaceness of mental life, this lack of personal distinction, which is a serious indictment of the college. In the realm of the intellect it is the easy rather than the hard things, the pleasant rather than the best things, that we desire. There is a story current at Harvard, told of the days when the elective system was in full swing. I do not know whether

it be true, but it certainly illustrates the truth of the extent to which the student will carry this intellectual living along the lines of least resistance — unless the authorities prevent him. A student presented to the dean for his approval a schedule of unrelated and widely scattered courses. The dean inquired what had been the principle of choice in making up the extraordinary selection. The young scholar answered, "Well, there is n't any course here which comes before ten o'clock in the morning, or is up more than one flight of stairs." Such a man, it may be said in passing, offers the best of arguments for a return to a semi-prescribed curriculum.

Now, one would expect that such a situation, being so obviously a perversion, would attract critical and solicitous attention. The American college represents a prodigious material investment. The amount of capital tied up in education in this country is unprecedented. When we contemplate the widespread and practical interest in schools and universities which the country manifests, and when we see on commencement day what is the result of it all, we might expect that somebody would be putting the college of liberal arts on trial and demanding that it justify its existence. Nor is that expectation unwarranted. That is precisely what the

American public is now beginning to do. I am sure the undergraduate body to-day utterly fails to realize the significance and the volume of criticism which is now being directed against the college. I shall have amply succeeded in this chapter if I can assure you of one thing, and make you feel its ensuing responsibility. Your college, to-day, is under fire; it is being asked to show better reasons than it can now show for the time and money and human genius which are devoted to it. Professor Lockwood, in his recent compilation of addresses, called "The Freshman and his College," quotes men of standing and ability and wide knowledge of the world, who variously allude to the college as "a club of idling classes; a training-school for shamming and shirking; the most gigantic illusion of the age." These men believe that a college diploma rarely assures intellectual discipline. The editor of a New York daily affirms that students now get from the college life "little but educational disadvantages." In an article on "What is Wrong with the College," appearing in the "Century" for May, 1914, occurs the following paragraph: —

"*The Incubus of the Idle Student.* Looked at in this light, we see how specious are the arguments which have led us to tolerate the college idler so long. Clinging to the remote

hope of his regeneration, we have permitted him to contaminate hundreds with the virus of intellectual listlessness. The time for tolerance is past. War measures are now necessary. The first and crying need of the American college to-day is the ejection, the ruthless ejection, of the man with the idle mind. He is the leper of college society."

Oxford University looks somewhat askance at the Rhodes scholars, and finds American youth brilliant, but devoid of intellectual persistency and without those broad scholastic foundations which are absolutely essential to first-rate advanced work. International experts in education tell us that our graduates are not as ripe and fit for professional study at twenty-three as German students are at the age of twenty. Business men complain that the college graduate is neither a trained nor a serious worker. Mr. Abraham Flexner, in his bitterly resented but brilliant book on the "American College" says: "A youth may win his degree to-day on a showing that would in an office cost him his desk."

President Pritchett, of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, who is a very potent figure in the academic world of our time, says: "The two objections generally

brought against the college to-day are vagueness of aim and lack of intellectual stamina." When it was announced that Mr. Lowell had accepted the presidency of Harvard University, the undergraduates gathered, one evening before his house, and, in responding to their greeting, he made an impromptu speech. In that informal talk he said certain things which quite clearly indicated his determination to reinstate scholarship as a primary aim in at least one American college. He said: "You are come here to be educated. The educated youth is n't merely he who can answer questions. He is the man who knows what are the questions that need to be answered." And he said another thing that will not easily be forgotten: "During my administration, the head of the college will not be caring about what you want, but about what you think." In this connection it may not be inappropriate to quote the story told of the undergraduate who attended one of Mr. Lowell's Sunday afternoon receptions. As he was leaving, the President very kindly said, "How do you find your work going?" The boy answered nonchalantly, "Oh, I think very well, sir. I guess I am getting gentleman's grades." "Ah," said Mr. Lowell, looking at him, "then you must be getting either A's or E's. A gentleman

either does his very best or he does n't pretend to do anything."

If, therefore, you ask the question, "Is scholarship a prime essential in the college?" I should answer very soberly and sincerely that I believe the continued existence of the college of liberal arts in New England depends upon a marked improvement in undergraduate learning. For four years you are non-producers there. The state and nation subsidize your institution, demanding no taxes from it, and the community supports you. It is not done to give you four more long vacations. It is not done in order to make you an expert in either social or athletic activities. It is not done that you may have a winter watering-place which is just touched with an academic flavor. It is done because the nation needs the services of a trained intelligence and a mature mind, and is willing to support you for a while for the express purpose that you may gain these things and issue from the college mental and moral leaders in your community. Expert service, to be rendered on the basis of the training of these four years, is the only justification of any of our colleges.

This Republic is facing social and industrial problems, economic, moral and religious questions, which are graver and more pressing than

any which it has ever faced before in its history. It is, as some one has said, being plundered by the rich and robbed by the poor, while the trusts and unions play the tyrant over both. The nation looks to its young, educated men to lead it out of the wilderness. It looks to you to be prime factors in the creation of what is our greatest social need to-day — a sober and responsible public opinion. The very stress of present circumstances is making America demand that a college man shall be what he purports to be — a person of trained intelligence and some expert knowledge, who is able to bring to bear, at any time, on any given problem, the concentrated and continued power of a well-furnished and disciplined mind. Again, the handwriting is appearing, over against the candlestick on the wall of the king's palace. And two things are being asked of the Chaldeans, the learned men of the community: first, that they read the writing, and then, having read it, that they be able to give the interpretation thereof.

Do not suppose, then, that loyalty to your institution means singing and shouting and cheering, or the perpetuation of picturesque barbarities, themselves only an expression of communal undergraduate life when it had no normal outlet for physical energy in organized

athletics. The state, the nation, the fathers and mothers of the boys who are to come here after you, care next to nothing for all that. They are concerned with graver, more real and difficult things. What they want to know is, does the college teach you how to think straight? Can it give you a rewarding method of work? Do you learn mental concentration there? Are you to graduate with a diploma that signifies evident and available intellectual power? If you cannot answer these questions in the affirmative, then you are, in sober truth, among your *Alma Mater's* most disloyal sons.

You owe it, then, to your college, as the most necessary element of your loyalty to her, that you address yourself to acquiring that knowledge of the arts and sciences which shall make you a well-informed and clearly thinking being. You owe it no less, to yourself and to the nation, to accept the austere delights and the fine satisfactions of the disciplined mind and cultivated spirit. Your undergraduate years offer you the priceless opportunity to relinquish obvious, immediate, and practical endeavors, and to acquaint yourselves with those great realms of thought and feeling which have nothing directly to do with the material and money-getting existence, but have everything to do with the em-

powering and liberating of your own spirit, since they reveal to you the mind and the heart of man at their best estate. One is constrained to plead with you to devote yourselves again to the humanities before, sent out from the sheltering academic walls, you essay the delicate and difficult business of living as a producer and a friend, a husband and a father, among your fellow human beings. The college does not exist to teach you a business or a trade, but to show you how to apply correctly whatever business you take up, and most of all, how to succeed in the business of living. You should, therefore, be steeped in the great literatures which are the record of the noblest emotion, the clearest thinking, of the race. You should read your Æschylus and Euripides and Sophocles — those men, whose somber and monumental dramas reveal the turbid ebb and flow in men's miserable hearts. You should be at home in the great revival of arts and letters of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and should know your Petrarch and Dante, your Boccaccio and Tasso and Vasari. You should know the great biographies and autobiographies of Europe, and stories like "Gil Blas." Most of all, you should read the Elizabethan dramatists, acquainting yourself with those frank and vigorous pictures of human

life, set forth in all the lusty ease of their fine English. "Tom Jones" should lie upon your study desk, as it lay upon Lowell's, because, as Thackeray said, "No one since Fielding has dared to draw a man as he is." And you ought to read Balzac, Hugo, and Dumas, because theirs is the literature which is impacted with the very blood and bone of human experience, and brings you close to the heart of a man. It is out of this wide and deep interest in the gracious and the beautiful, the vivid and the picturesque in life, that men grow to appreciate all sorts and kinds of their fellow men. This will stimulate the imagination, will keep you from mental commonplaceness, make articulate your spirit, free you from the narrow range of interests and sympathies which is the lot of uneducated men. Thus will you put yourself in sympathy with the time spirit and with those frail contemporary lives that are borne along its current. Thus will your thought spring forth on high levels, interpreting, not condemning, guiding, not repressing, assuaging, not exploiting, the multiform desires of men.

Here is some faint picture of the sort of gracious intellectual interests which you would naturally have were you scholarly inclined, which you must have if you are to do your duty by

yourself, your college, and your nation. It may seem to you that I have been unfair to the undergraduate in these pages, and that the picture I have drawn of your activities is less a portrait than a caricature. But it is a good thing for you to perceive just how those activities may appear when they are regarded from the point of view of that older and more responsible portion of the community upon which both you and your institution depend. I am not advocating turning the college into a community of immature scholastics, nor abolishing its social activities or its vigorous physical delights. I believe in these things profoundly, and myself enjoy them immensely. They have a natural and important place in your lives, and in all normal lives. I am only appealing for a just scale of values, asking you to put first things first, and casting no reproach upon pleasure nor depreciating in the slightest degree all the joy that can be crowded into a human life. All of it which justly comes your way will be none too much. Only the pleasures which are adequate and worthy for you, the elect youth of the Republic, are not the idle but the achieved pleasures; not the easy but the difficult joys; those deep and abiding satisfactions which come from intellectual self-mastery, from winning the battles of the mind. What

you should enjoy most is victory in the fight against intellectual sloth, mental trivialities, easy-going indulgence.

Therefore, one ventures to plead with you to be ashamed of illiteracy and ambitious to exercise your minds and to know the truth. Therefore, one ventures to remind you that the permanent and central aim of college life can be nothing less precious or difficult than the acquirement of intellectual capacity. This is n't the poor ability of the grind to perform a particular mechanical thing in a prescribed, particular way. It's the power of focusing on any intellectual problem the full force of a trained intelligence. And it is precisely this power which the courses which are taught in a college of liberal arts can and do develop. I have no doubt much of your work there seems to you remote and impractical; that it seems like a wasting of time to put energy and person into the acquiring of knowledge, the learning of formulæ, which you never expect to use directly when you go out into, let us say, the business world. Yet it is just here that the undergraduate makes his mistake. All these disciplinary and cultural studies of the classical course are vastly more practical than we are willing to admit. The study of the binomial theorem is visibly and directly of no use in brokerage or

banking. Yet, as Professor Leacock, of McGill University, has pointed out, "One who has mastered it will find it easier to appear promptly at nine o'clock in the morning, to attend to what is said to him, to understand his own ignorance and do his best to remove it, than one who has never seen the inside of an algebra." Most boys feel it unnecessary, to-day, to gain or maintain a thorough acquaintance with the Greek and Latin tongues, nor can they see how such acquirement is related to our modern world. Yet the mastery of these languages bears directly upon four of the great professions, all of which are attracting an increasing number of men, to-day, into their ranks — those of the ministry, of law, of journalism, and of politics. In all these fields, men must be able to express themselves before their fellow men with accuracy, force, and ease. They must be able, not only to think on their feet, but to transmit their thoughts with precision and effectiveness. Therefore, to them the knowledge of the great tongues from which our English language springs, the mastery of the Greek and Latin derivatives of our common speech, which enables them to distinguish subtle differences between words, that are apparent synonyms, and to arouse the imagination of their hearers by using words with the sense of their background, their associations,

and connotations, is of prime importance. Truly the immediate future will need what all the past has needed — philosophers and statesmen, and its own literature, and a culture able to enrich and ennoble life as well as to serve its conveniences. Therefore, for the serious student and for his generation the college can do so much more and better than the mere fitting him for a special career if it prescribes those studies which offer a comprehensive view of the knowledge which is to be most serviceable to the whole of his after life, which is to insure the real development of the man and the true freedom of the human spirit.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DISTASTE FOR THE BEAUTIFUL

We are come, to my regret, to the last of our friendly and informal talks on undergraduate problems. But I am rejoicing, in the fascinating if elusive theme which is to occupy us in it, namely, the æsthetic problem of the college. Well I know that vague feelings of discomfort arise in the undergraduate breast when such a topic is announced. It represents rather a strange and alien subject for you, removed from the everyday area of undergraduate experience. Yet I think it has a place in the discussion of college problems, for it must not be forgotten that in our country you are to be called upon to set standards as well as to transmit ideas for your generation.

And this office of yours is the more important, because, as perhaps not all of us realize, a distinct decline in taste has been one of the features of the history of New England during the preceding century. Even as the Greeks who belonged to the flower of Attic civilization, the Athenians of the days of Phidias and Pericles, should they be able to visit an American city,

would be appalled beyond measure at the hideous noise, the garish lights, the oddly contrasted colors, which make up the crude and inchoate expressions of our communal life, and would consider our civilization merely a complicated barbarism, so, I fancy, our colonial forbears, if they could return at this moment, would find that their descendants had indeed progressed in economic wealth and material comforts, but that they had quite retrogressed in matters of appreciation and taste. We fail to remember that the early settlements along the Atlantic seacoast, primitive as they were and embosomed in a savage wilderness, nevertheless perpetuated many of the aristocratic traditions and standards of that incomparable English life from which they were derived. This was strikingly evidenced in their architecture, that colonial modification of the Georgian type which the new building material, wood, and the new climatic and social conditions of the settlements brought about. In few places are there to be found better composed, more stately buildings than, let us say, Griffin Hall, at Williams College, with its delicately penciled front, or the ancient colonial State House fronting State Street in Boston, a building which, with the simplest material and the fewest lines, achieves an extraordinary effect

of daintiness and grace. Nowhere is there a church-tower more light and airy and upward-reaching than the belfry, surmounted by its double-storied lantern and spire, which presides, at Park Street corner, over Boston Common. And nowhere are there domestic dwellings which give more happily the impression of stateliness and hospitality, of dignity and simplicity, than do such mansions as the Craigie house in Cambridge, or the presidents' houses at Amherst and Williams Colleges. These latter, indeed, are expressions of post-colonial life, but derive their beauty from colonial influence and tradition. In the manual and decorative arts, as well, the early days of the American colonies saw truly notable achievements. The colonial reproductions of the Chippendale, Adam, Sheraton, and Heppelwhite models of furniture, the delicately carved woodwork wherewith the colonial houses were adorned, the Sheffield plate, the engraved silver, the festooned and rose-sprigged china of the period — all these mark expressions of the decorative impulse which in their elegant simplicity it would be hard to excel in any time or place. Moreover, the manners and conversation of the time also had their touch of an Old-World formality and stateliness which is quaintly preserved for us in the epistolatory writings of the

day. The president of at least one ancient institution of learning in New England, in signing the official documents of his university, still retains the formal and gracious superscription of our early forbears, and inscribes himself, "Your most obedient and humble servant."

I think it to be true, therefore, that the colonial college, which was part and parcel of the life of the time, for all its primitive equipment, and the high-school character of its teaching, was a much more cultivated and sophisticated institution than we are apt to consider it, and the level of taste among undergraduates was considerably higher than we are wont to suppose. For the colonial colleges were not the first hesitant reachings-out after a cultivated life by a primitive community. They were the deliberate continuation on the part of English-bred men and women of that aristocratic tradition upon which the colleges across the sea were founded. They were established as factors in the theocratic, aristocratic politics of the time. Harvard and Yale, the pioneers of learning in New England, were in the beginning a sort of cross between a theological seminary and a training-school for the sons of the colonial gentry. Down to 1772 in Harvard, and to 1763 in Yale, students' names appeared in the annual catalogues of these insti-

tutions, not in alphabetical order, but according to the rank of their parents in colonial society. First came sons of the governors of the colony; then of the ministers of the Gospel; then of civil and military authorities; then of lawyers and physicians; then of merchants in large trade, that is, sea-going merchants; then of freeholders or farmers; then of workers in towns. It was part of the business of the colleges to produce that combination of cultivated manner and manly accomplishment which made up the ideal of the English gentleman. Moreover, nearly all the undergraduates of the colonial colleges were not merely destined for professional careers, but came, either from the professional stratum of the community or from homes where the learned professions were revered and exalted in the eyes of the children. Hence, partly because of the class in the community from which the undergraduate body was drawn, and partly because of the sincere and simple taste in both inward and outward matters which marked these frontier settlements, the colleges in the early days represented quite as much æsthetic as ethical idealism.

Now, it is hardly necessary to say that they have suffered since those days a sad change, and this is due to a variety of causes. The German

ideal of an exact knowledge, as contrasted with a more general cultivation, operated early in the last century to modify the English influence, emphasizing in the literary and classic flavor of the college, the severer note of erudition and intensifying the discipline. This was a distinct contribution to American education, bringing in new elements of strength and intellectual vigor; but it added nothing to that cultivation of the imagination and correcting of the æsthetic ideals which was also a part of a college's duty in a new and heterogeneous community like ours. The rise first of the natural, then of the humanistic, sciences, in the second half of the nineteenth century, greatly enlarged the curriculum, and, in the absorption of time and attention formerly given to the classics, largely modified the feelings and the taste, as well as the schedule, of the undergraduate. Scientific pursuits, from the nature of the material with which they deal and of the methods which they employ, cannot produce as fine and discriminating appreciations of beauty, on the part of the student, as the translating and composing of prose and verse literature. The passion for the practical in American life has encouraged an attitude of half-contemptuous condescension toward all forms and expression of the ideal which are produced

for no ulterior end than their own loveliness. And so it has come about that we distrust culture and spell it, derisively, with a captial "C." We quote, with complacent approbation, the late Mr. Godkin's satirical remark, that a university of the English type is the ideal place for those people who are chiefly interested in lawn-tennis, gardening, and true religion. We feel that sentiment is womanish; that the expending of money on the creating and perpetuating of the vision of beauty is to be suspected; and that the practical, the accurate, the didactic, and demonstrable should represent the aims of the college course.

But most of all have the American colleges changed because the American people have so changed. There has been an enormous and rapid increase in the wealth of the country, brought about, not by the exercise of extraordinary industry or financial genius on our part, but by the unhappy accident which has enabled us ruthlessly to exploit the natural resources of a virgin continent. Up to the time of the Civil War we were an isolated nation, largely agricultural, cut off by the Atlantic Ocean from that ancient society and its painfully achieved standards, whose early remembrance had begun to fade from the minds of the descendants of the colonial

settlers. Hence with money, and no background, with that passionate desire for self-expression inseparable from a young and growing nation, but no standards to direct and restrain it, America blossomed out about 1876 into a tropical luxuriance of æsthetic horrors. Our domestic dwellings were Queen Anne in front, but far from regal in the rear. It was hard to say, concerning the palaces of our millionaires, whether they inclined, in their opulent magnificence, to the standards of early Pullman or late North German Lloyd. Ostentatious extravagance, bizarre and grotesque decorative expressions, were the order of the day. We painted snow-shovels with old oaken buckets and set them up in the fireplace. We tied up the legs of milking-stools with baby-blue satin ribbons; sketched midwinter landscapes upon them, and deposited them in the drawing-room, near to the Rogers plaster group of the farmers playing checkers on a barrel-head, or under the black walnut what-not, covered with who knows what in the way of "objects of bigotry and virtue." And then came the influx of enormous alien populations, with their peasant traditions, their barren and impoverished lives. They, too, sharing in the material prosperity and social opportunities of the new country, naturally set about finding ways to express their ideas of

the opulent, the gorgeous, and the grandiose. So that America became, and, to a lessening degree, still is, a vast experiment station in naïve and unconventional æsthetic expression. Nor is it, I think, too much to say that the average American taste to-day, while it has markedly and rapidly improved in the last two decades, represents, for the most part, a recrudescence of barbarian delights and vanities. Take, for instance, our largest metropolis, New York City. It is not merely the wharf of the nation, it is also its chief communal expression. It is the place to which Americans go from all over the continent to spend their money; to which we naturally gravitate in our hours of relaxation, those moments of freedom from economic pressure, when we no longer do what we have to do in order to earn our bread and butter, but what we would like to do for our own personal satisfaction. New York is, therefore, the great amusement center of the continent. And in no way do men more clearly reveal their essential æsthetic and ethical characteristics than in the types of pleasures and amusements which they choose for their hours of recreation. Hence the picture of the American public, as it amuses itself in New York, is no unfair exhibition of its average æsthetic standards. That picture focuses in one of the most fascinat-

ing and most terrible sights to be seen anywhere in the modern world, Broadway at the height of the season on a winter's night. There is, indeed, a lighted way, brighter than under the sun at noonday, its glittering electric signs making every appeal that the hawker's genius can suggest to human cupidity, vanity, and lust. There are the great trams endlessly crashing up and down the center of the street, filled to the lowest step of their platforms with restless, chattering, volatile human beings. On both sides of that lighted way are the open doors of the houses of eating and drinking; houses of amusement and shame; houses where strange and terrible pleasures, sweet and secret, and devastating vices, find their nightly patrons. In and out of those open doors, hour after hour, flows the pleasure-seeking crowd like the tides of an unwholesome sea. And over all the dust and mist and turmoil, rising up out of the scents and perfumes of that terrible assembly, is the characteristic cry of our age: to have, to hold, to buy; to eat, to drink, to feel; to get, to sell, to exploit the world for power; to exploit one's self for pleasure — this is to live. The same hard and ruthless look, the wide-open, iron gaze of the man who knows all and has done all, has left untried no horrid experiment from which he might derive a new

sensation, — that look which Bronzino painted into the faces of his Florentines in the days of the Medici, — that sinister and unsensitive look is in the eyes of many an American to-day.

Now, all this has profoundly modified the college. It has both popularized and vulgarized it. Everybody's son attends it to-day, and everybody's standard prevails in it, for the under-graduate body will never be very much better or very much worse than the homes out of which it issues. There is nothing, therefore, surprising in the fact that, coming from a civilization so opulent and so barbaric, so extreme and artificial in its forms of amusement, and geared to such high nervous tension, the youth who enter the college should represent a low level of æsthetic development. That they do represent this low level is, I think, only too apparent. Certain of their widespread habits bear witness to it, habits which, entirely aside from the moral obliquity which sometimes attaches to them, yet make one cringe to speak of. One is under-graduate profanity, which is even more a sign of vulgarity than it is of illiteracy. Ancient words of vice, handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation, age-old defamations of the Almighty, are inexpressibly detestable when they issue from the mouths of youths. That the

grosser forms of immorality are decidedly lessening among undergraduates is the almost universal testimony of those who are competent to speak on the subject. But some of the worst language I have ever listened to, — the most profane, the most callously licentious, — I have heard from striplings in American colleges. Undergraduate profanity deserves very serious attention from us all, not merely because of the irreverence which it indicates, but because of the absence of imagination and sensitiveness which it reveals. Strange to say, it does not always so much indicate the speaker's spiritual debasement, his religious incapacity, as it does the absence in him of personal refinement, decent standards, æsthetic self-respect. Another witness to this personal declension is the quite modern habit of chewing gum, the truly frightful spectacle one may see of whole platoons of youth watching a ball game from the bleachers, and working their jaws in unison in a sort of rotary motion, chewing like so many cattle the social cud, utterly oblivious to the depth of personal commonness to which the indulgence sinks them. Another is the lack of interest on the part of most undergraduates in good music. Their devotion is to trivial tunes, written in syncopated measures, known as "ragtime." One remembers here the cheap

musical show which has long been considered the chief *pièce de résistance* for the undergraduate in his lighter moments, a show which has neither wit nor meaning nor melody, nor anything but its direct appeal to the most elemental of all the senses to commend it. I think few things more clearly indicate the contempt which age sometimes has for youth, than the class of amusements which it offers them, which it is quite confident they will gladly accept, and which, alas, they invariably do accept.

Again, the kinds of interior decoration which are devised to lure from your pockets the restless pennies indicate the low level of taste to which you have fallen. We adorn our rooms with flannel banners. We affect two sorts of pictures — the audaciously sentimental and the sporting virile. The sentimental variety is illustrated in the well-known print of a lithe and lissom young woman in full, very full, evening-dress, — what might be called a noticeable evening-dress, — swooning in the arms of a tall and slender youth, rather consciously superior in pumps and claw-hammer coat, who imprints an impassioned salute upon the lady's too-willing lips. The manly variety is illustrated in those Renwick posters, printed in primary colors, which one sees displayed in every college bookstore. They

represent the Freshman of a vacuous countenance, blowing smoke-rings like a naughty little devil; the Sophomore, with his little cap awry, and his exaggerated pup; the "fusser," learning his 'Arry and 'Arriette art by practicing on the dressmaker's dummy; the Senior, lighting a black cigar with his flaming diploma. All these travesties of life and nature, indescribably worthless, but quite popular, indicate into what valleys of humiliation we have descended. Again, the lack of any independent critical judgment on your part in literature, your innocent inability to recognize excellence except when it is underscored and labeled for your benefit, also indicate the same deficiencies.

I am well aware of the many and the brilliant exceptions to all this which every undergraduate community offers; of the large number of young men who are quick to appreciate and keen to analyze both the beautiful and the good in the life about them. Yet I think it may fairly be said that the average undergraduate is rather an obtuse and unawakened creature, only seeing the things in the world that he expects to see, usually unable, in any given experience, to distinguish its salient and characteristic excellencies or to perceive its particular defects, possessed of no clear or adequate literary and artistic standards.

There is, therefore, a very real reason for devoting these pages to the discussion of your æsthetic problem. And it is a part of your unsophistication, your barbarism, that the very word "æsthetic" is repellent in your ears. It connotes to you "pink teas," and an attempted transatlantic accent, and a general emasculation of life. We confound the lovers of the beautiful with those men in whom the appreciation of beauty has not been balanced or made vigorous by a combination with more sturdy but no more normal attributes. We think of the *dilettante*, who is the elegant idler in the community, an amateur who exploits art, but has no thorough knowledge of it or any creative ability. Or we think of the sentimentalist, who has a superficial and emotional appreciation of beauty, without insight into its moral aspects, and with neither depth nor continuity of feeling in his rapidly shifting allegiances. Or we think of the sensationalist, who loves beauty because of the physical or sensual delights to which it may be made to minister, and whom we regard with abhorrence and contempt. Therefore, when we meet a man of cultivated manner, delicate and sensitive feeling, wide and gracious interests, we are apt to put upon him the burden of proof of showing that all this development of his æsthetic nature

has not emasculated his person or degraded his spirit.

The first thing we must do, then, is to try to understand just what sort of a man the true æsthete is. I think of him as one who has a quick and eager appreciation of the creative spirit, and especially of those expressions of that spirit which sum up the sense of goodness and of beauty in the world, which record the finest emotion, the keenest hungers, the most imaginative conceptions of human life. These things interest him quite as much, indeed more, than abstract philosophies, or discoveries in natural science, or the ingenious application of such discoveries to practical purposes. This man is an idealist. His face is turned towards the future, where all our faces should be turned, yet he has a keen and loving perception that all our future must grow out of the past, that, as some one has recently said: "You cannot think of it as uncoupled from the rest of time and allowed to run wild." Hence he prizes all ancient memorials of thought and effort as sincere and touching expressions of the growing human spirit. He is moved by the tone and consecration which age imparts. The philistine is scornful of the treasures which we have inherited. They appear to him out-moded, inconvenient, ridiculous,

faded, having little real or monetary value. The cultivated man perceives that every inheritance of truth or beauty, coming out of the past, is the proved material from which is to be developed the future. It is the prepared ground for the garden of beauty that is to be. For all such inheritances furnish standards, indicate methods, transmit at least the beginnings of sane and lovely visions. Hence they dispel ignorance, temper extravagant enthusiasm, subdue crude originality, help us to see life clearly and to see it whole. In the "Grammar of Assent," Newman has a very beautiful passage, in which he refers to this interpretative, illuminating office of ancient beauty for the present day. "How often," he says, "we read as schoolboys some great line of classic verse, or famous bit of prose, the product, perhaps, of an Ionian festival, or a morning upon the Sabine Hills, and it seemed to us mere rhetorical commonplace. We could not understand why it had lived from generation to generation. But then, when long years have passed, and we have had experience of life, we re-read the ancient couplet or the hackneyed paragraph, and they startle us with their sad penetration, their vivid exactness." Through all the varied channels, then, of literature, ethics, religion, and all the arts, the

noblest expressions of the human spirit have come down to us from the days that are no more. And on these expressions the sensitive and reflective man loves to ponder, and in them all he takes a sincere and innocent delight. Now, to do this is the very thing which the undergraduate needs, because so few of you are reflective beings. You accept life, but you don't scrutinize it; you take what each day brings, but with no intelligent valuation. You have few conscious appreciations, because you know little of the world's proved and tested best. You do not hold yourselves up against the great achievements of the past, letting the eye sink inward and the heart lie plain in the light of their beauty. Hence the thing that you know least about in your undergraduate days is your own selves.

For the dwelling upon the lovely and gracious and beautiful expressions of our human life — the bringing yourself up to them — is like coming up to a touchstone, these things reveal you to yourself. They expose your deficiencies. They awaken your possibilities. Any supreme work of art is a mirror in which you view your own spiritual lineaments. Acquaintance with old, unhappy, far-off things, with the heroes who went down scornful before many spears, with the music which records, in the sweetness of its

strain, the anguish of living, these arouse your own heroism, your own sensitive and perceptive spirit. To know and ponder how men have toiled; what men have suffered; to see the dreams of the race incarnated in bronze, spread out on canvas, made articulate in prose and verse, rising in dim and intricate richness of stone, in some Gothic chapel — all this means, not emasculation, not sentimentality, but growth in sensitiveness, in personal fastidiousness, in breadth and intelligence of spirit, in vigor and elevation of soul.

Here, for instance, in the Plaza at Fifty-ninth Street, is Saint-Gaudens's group of gilded bronze, Sherman astride his stallion, proud, confident, determined, Victory, impetuous in triumph, sweeping on before. The cultivated man stops to fix his eyes in sheer delight upon those metal forms. He is not a *poseur* or an emotionalist. But there he sees the spirit of majesty and honor and courage and pride made clear and evident to him. It feeds his hungry heart on the gods' food, and he goes on his way illumined and refreshed. Or one enters one day the Palace of the Louvre, and passing through the gorgeous gallery of Apollo, comes into the *salon carré*. A small canvas hangs, to his left, upon the wall — the portrait of a young man holding a glove.

The simple dignity, the unconscious modesty of youth, is there. The clear and candid gaze, the quiet, sober mouth, the whole figure — all is instinct with the noble frankness of a princely boy. One looks upon that portrait, and tears rise in the heart. Ideals and dreams which we had thought gone from us forever lift again on the far horizon of the mind, remote, but clear, like distant towers in a sunset sky. The old hungers for the simple, the chivalrous, and the true awake, and behold, our youth has been returned and we breathe the air of heaven again. Thus our love of beauty has refreshed the inner man. Or on some lonely day it is borne in upon us all over again that life has, oh, quite as much sorrow as pleasure, and that our very joys are three parts pain. We feel the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune; we are tired of forever expecting but never receiving. And so we long for the blessed human touch, and crave to enter deep into the heart of our strange world. And then one turns to the great Elizabethan. He listens to Iago and Othello in their sinister conference, or hears the whisperings of Juliet as she leans over the balcony of her father's house. But does one just read cold words, dialogues cunningly constructed and built up? Oh, no! one does not read at all, but listens to men and

women pouring out the glowing, full-throated utterance of their passion with unpremeditated art. Horror-stricken we see the chamber at Cyprus. Softly, we too, walk in the orchard at Verona; and in this mystic touch with the unchanging heart of our race our lives are comforted and composed.

Thus, then, we gild the prosaic present with the grace and poetry of the past. And we do far more than that. Thus we renew our own capacity for vision, and are better able, in our day and generation, to play our part and serve joyously and courageously our time. Thus our personalities are enriched and deepened. There is "more" of us, and the more becomes better and better. We increase our points of contact with the world; we are able, through these sympathies, these appreciations, to enter into and understand larger and larger areas of human aspiration and experience. More life interests us, and a versatility of interests besets us as we grow older, and the whole of our natures is developed under this fine universality of appeal. So that, as we return to our several communities, we carry back new sources of inspiration, new insights into the human spirit, new, chastened, significant ways of expressing our own genius, to enrich and illumine the life to which we come.

So this is my final plea as we close these talks together. Our American life is restless, filled with many trivial and detached activities, arid and monotonous in expression, with comparatively few interests and not many subtle or precious joys. But chance has given to you, its sons, four years, set apart from the roaring and the turbulent stream of the world, which may be years of quietness and beauty, devoted to the deepening and enriching of life, to the discovery of those values in it which fate can neither give nor take away. There is no taint in the joy that such a quest will bring. It is admirable and necessary to have vigor, initiative, courage, self-reliance. I know how you all worship virility, and that for which the word appears to stand. It is also admirable, and no less manly, to have delicacy of temper, vividness and quickness of delight, in the presence of perfect objects. It is a good practice for American youth to ponder on human life, to search for its hidden secret in those expressions of it which come from the heart of the poet, the painter, the sculptor, the maker of churches, the builder of stately palaces. It is a good thing for us to unite ourselves, by reading and contemplation, with these creative and perceptive souls, so that our own insights are developed from theirs.

Thus we, too, become responsive to the mood of a building, to the delicious play and interplay of tone upon a canvas, to the lights and shadows of a group, to the modeling of some sculptured face; so we, too, feel the inward atmosphere of each individual who comes within our notice, and know the fingers of his spirit when they reach out to ours; so we, too, live in a bright and ideal world, whose kingdoms of the spirit, which the imagination has conquered for itself, become, as Hawthorne said, "a thousandfold more real to us than the earth whereon we stamp our feet!" All this means a complex and highly developed personality. Yet are we not sent to college, that of us just such developed and educed persons may be made? All this means a development of the feminine powers in men. But all great men have something of that intuitive insight, that sensitiveness to the psychological climate, and that power to respond wholly to a great ideal, which is what we mean by feminine attributes. And even as you should loathe and hate effeminacy, so should you revere and cultivate these fine and subtle and truly precious things.

And then, as life goes on, it will, indeed, take much away. Old loves will die, old enthusiasms chill, old interests fade. The body will thicken

and coarsen, and age, like a wintry shadow, creep over your face. The world will pass ever swifter and swifter before your eyes; more and more it will seem like the vague and insubstantial pageant of a dream. But the sense of its mystic and imperishable beauty will deepen. Sorrow only clarifies that sense, pain and effort form the somber background against which it shines more clear. Then with every succeeding year you will surmount life, not be broken by it, because you will not lose your power to respond, to leap up and answer to it, to be so moved and enthralled by it. Every year it will interest you more, and you shall be more within it, less outside of it, feeling yourself a part of its solemn and majestic grace. So that at the end you will be able to say:

"I love the brooks that down their channels fret
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they,
The innocent brightness of a newborn day is lovely yet;
The clouds that gather round the setting sun
To take a sober coloring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality:
Another race hath been and other palms are won:
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

11075

The Evangelical
School of Theology

DATE DUE

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

United Theological Seminary Library
MAIN LB2321.F47 1914
Fitch, Albert The college course and the
3 0645 0005 1663 9